



**Administration for Children and Families**

Office of Head Start

Early Head Start Grantee - Brevard County, Florida

HHS-2016-ACF-OHS-CH-R04-1147

Application Due Date: 11/30/2015

Early Head Start Grantee - Brevard County, Florida

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**Department of Health & Human Services  
Administration for Children and Families**

**Program Office:** Office of Head Start  
**Funding Opportunity Title:** Early Head Start Grantee - Brevard County, Florida  
**Announcement Type:** Initial  
**Funding Opportunity Number:** HHS-2016-ACF-OHS-CH-R04-1147  
**Primary CFDA Number:** 93.600  
**Due Date for Applications:** 11/30/2015

**Executive Summary**

*Notices:*

- **Applicants are strongly encouraged to read the entire funding opportunity announcement (FOA) carefully and observe the application formatting requirements listed in *Section IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission*. For more information on applying for grants, please visit "How to Apply for a Grant" on the ACF Grants Page at <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/howto>.**

The Head Start program provides high-quality, comprehensive early education programming to low-income children and families so that children start school ready to succeed. In 2007, Congress enacted legislation that required, for the first time in the program's history, greater competition within communities for Head Start funding. The goal of the legislation and the subsequent regulations, which were effective on December 9, 2011, is to ensure that federal Head Start funding is directed to the organizations that are most capable of delivering high-quality early education that puts children on a pathway to improved outcomes, school success, and opportunity.

This funding opportunity announcement(FOA) is the mechanism for implementing this competitive requirement as well as competitions that result from grantee relinquishments and terminations. This announcement solicits applications from public or private non-profit organizations, including faith-based organizations or for-profit organizations that seek to provide high-quality Early Head Start services to children and families residing in Brevard County, Florida.

Funds in the amount of \$1,093,008 annually will be available to provide Early Head Start program services to eligible infants, toddlers, and pregnant women in Brevard County, Florida. This dollar amount includes base funding of \$1,066,683 (for use in program operations, staffing, materials, equipment, facilities, etc.) and training and technical assistance (T/TA) funding of \$26,325. The appropriate use of T/TA funds for the purposes of improving program quality and helping prepare children to succeed in school are described in Section

645A(g) of the Head Start Act.

The Head Start program is administered by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), an operating division (OPDIV) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). ACF intends to fund applications that demonstrate an organization's commitment and capacity to operate an Early Head Start program that raises the quality of early care and education in the community and helps children eventually start school ready to succeed. School readiness requires that children are cognitively, physically, socially, and emotionally prepared to continue to make progress as they grow and eventually enter preschool and Kindergarten. Effective Early Head Start programs help children develop in each of these areas. ACF is seeking applicants that are able to use the best evidence-based early care and education practices and home visiting services, if proposed, in their programs and provide effective family engagement and health promotion.

In addition to the Head Start Act, 42 U.S.C. 9801 et seq., Early Head Start is governed by Program Performance Standards that define the scope of services necessary to support children's development. These Program Performance Standards are found in 45 CFR Parts 1301-1310.

Eligible applicants are limited to local public or private non-profit agencies, including community-based and faith-based organizations, or local for-profit agencies, pursuant to Section 641(a)(1) of the Head Start Act, 42 U.S.C. § 9836(a)(1) in the service area, that can provide Head Start services to children and families residing in Brevard County, Florida.

### **Public Comment**

ACF welcomes public comments from the community listed in this FOA. We are particularly interested in hearing from parents of children currently enrolled in Early Head Start, persons employed by such agencies, local government officials, and other representatives of the community to be served. The intent of the public comment is to inform ACF about the needs of the service area and any pertinent information commenters may wish to provide about potential applicants before the FOA closes. Comments should be sent to the Office of Head Start (OHS) Operations Center at [OHS Tech@reviewops.org](mailto:OHS Tech@reviewops.org).

## **I. Program Description**

### **Statutory Authority**

The Head Start program is authorized by the Head Start Act, 42 U.S.C. § 9831 et seq.

### **Description**

#### **Program Background and Purpose**

The Head Start program provides grants to public and private non-profit and for-profit agencies to provide comprehensive child development services to predominately economically disadvantaged children and families. Head Start's primary purpose is to prepare children to be ready for school. In fiscal year (FY) 1995, the Early Head Start program was established to serve pregnant women and children from birth to 3 years of age in recognition of the mounting evidence that the earliest years matter a great deal to children's growth and development. Since its beginning in 1965, Head Start has served more than 32 million

children and their families. In FY 2014, Head Start was funded to serve 927,275 children and families; of these, nearly 117,000 participants were served in Early Head Start programs. There are approximately 1,700 Head Start grantees, including about 980 grantees providing Early Head Start. Additionally, in FY 2015, ACF awarded 275 Early Head Start – Child Care Partnership and Early Head Start Expansion grants to serve tens of thousands of additional infants and toddlers.

Early Head Start programs must provide directly or through referral, early, continuous, intensive, and comprehensive child development and family support services that will enhance the physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development of participating children; support parents' efforts to fulfill their parental roles; and help parents move toward self-sufficiency.

Given the need for continuity of care for pregnant women, and infant and toddler age children, the OHS expects that grantees will serve children in a full-year model with a minimum of 48 weeks. OHS expects that grantees will implement a full-year model that will require per-child costs that, in most circumstances, will be higher than the costs needed to provide part-year services. It is also expected that applicants, based on community and family need, will select program options that best meet the changing needs of families over the time they are in the program. To meet this goal, it is critical that Head Start funds awarded through this FOA do not supplant existing services.

Programs providing Early Head Start services must:

- Provide high-quality early education services that promote the physical, social, emotional, cognitive, and language development of young children and families during pregnancy, upon birth, and during the early years;
- Provide services through appropriate program options: center-based, home-based, family child care, combination option, or with the approval of OHS, a locally designed option;
- Ensure continuity of services and smooth transitions between program options when the needs of families change, such as when children are enrolled in full-day options with child care subsidies and families lose subsidies due to job loss;
- Assist enrolled pregnant women to access comprehensive prenatal and postpartum care through referrals;
- Provide pregnant women and other family members, as appropriate, with prenatal education on fetal development;
- Provide information on the benefits of breastfeeding to all pregnant and nursing mothers;
- Provide arrangements for nursing mothers who choose to breast-feed in center-based programs;
- Provide services in a culturally and linguistically responsive manner to support the home environment of the child;
- Provide early opportunities for infants and toddlers to grow and develop in warm, nurturing, and inclusive environments;
- Recruit, train, and supervise high-quality staff to ensure the kind of warm and continuous relationships between caregivers and children that are crucial to learning and development for infants and toddlers;
- Provide professional development plans for each staff member to ensure that each staff

person maintains qualifications for his/her position, including meeting all requirements for staff working with infants and toddlers (Head Start Act Sections 645A(h)(1) and (2));

- Ensure that the level of services provided to families responds to their needs and circumstances, including appropriate screening for all children and referral for children with documented behavioral problems;
- Ensure that infants, toddlers, and pregnant women receive health, mental health, nutritional, and oral health screenings and services, as well as follow-up evaluation and treatment;
- Ensure that services provided meet the needs of children with disabilities and their families, including procedures to identify such children and plans to coordinate with programs providing services as described in Section 645A(b)(11) of the Head Start Act.
- Ensure parent involvement in policy and decision making;
- Provide comprehensive health and mental health services for children and pregnant women, including helping the family to identify and access a medical home to ensure ongoing care;
- Provide parent education that supports healthy parent and child relationships, including working with fathers;
- Ensure formal linkages with other agencies in the community providing services to pregnant women, infants, and toddlers, including local Head Start programs;
- Support transition planning with families that ensures each pregnant woman and child experiences smooth transitions into Early Head Start, and from Early Head Start to Head Start or other preschool programs.

### **Administrative Cost Waiver**

Early Head Start grantees must, unless a waiver is granted, contribute 20 percent of the total cost of the program from non-federal funds. A waiver may be granted for any of the grounds listed in Section 640(b) of the Head Start Act. No more than 15 percent of total costs may be used for program administration. An HHS official may grant a waiver of the 15 percent limitation on allowable development and administration costs for an Early Head Start program approving a higher percentage for a specific period of time not to exceed 12 months (45 CFR § 1301.32).

### **Monitoring**

OHS is responsible for monitoring the quality of Early Head Start program services and the grantee's compliance with federal and other applicable requirements. The federal government uses several mechanisms to conduct its oversight. Most notably, each Early Head Start grantee is subject to onsite monitoring reviews. These reviews can either be announced or unannounced. During onsite visits, all aspects of a grantee's program are reviewed, including compliance with health and safety requirements, compliance with rules related to children's eligibility for the program, and compliance with financial management requirements. New grantees are reviewed at the end of their first year of operation based on the authority in Section 641A(c)(1)(B) of the Head Start Act.

As a condition of acceptance of an award under this FOA, all grantees are required to participate fully in ACF-sponsored evaluations and adhere to all evaluation protocols

established by ACF to be carried out by its designee contractors.

### **Eligible Participants**

Early Head Start provides services for predominantly low-income pregnant women and children from birth to 3 years of age. Families must either be below the poverty line or be eligible for public assistance in order to be income eligible for Early Head Start. In addition, homeless children and children in foster care are categorically eligible for Early Head Start. Children are selected for enrollment based on age and income eligibility and relative level of need with regard to other criteria that are identified within each community (45 CFR § 1305.6).

Head Start regulations permit up to 10 percent of enrolled children and pregnant women to be from families that do not meet these low-income criteria. (NOTE: Please see Section 645(a) of the Head Start Act for a complete discussion of Early Head Start eligibility. It is not expected, however, given the relatively low Early Head Start participation rates, that the provisions of Section 645(a)(1)(B)(iii)(II) regarding serving up to an additional 35 percent of a program's enrollment from families with incomes greater than or equal to 100 percent, but less than 130 percent, of the poverty line would apply for this announcement.)

Additionally, Head Start programs must ensure that at least 10 percent of the total number of children enrolled by the Head Start agency and delegates are children with disabilities unless a waiver is granted.

Federal Head Start funds must be used to serve eligible children as described in this section. Additional children who are not income-eligible for Early Head Start can be served so long as their participation is supported through other funding sources including child care subsidies, public school pre-K allocations, parent-paid tuition, or other sources. Such program designs may be beneficial in promoting socioeconomic diversity within classrooms. All costs must be allocated to appropriate funding sources in compliance with federal requirements.

### **Early Head Start Grantee: Brevard County, Florida**

ACF solicits applications from local public or private non-profit agencies, including community-based and faith-based organizations, or local for-profit agencies, pursuant to Section 641(a)(1) of the Head Start Act, 42 U.S.C. § 9836(a)(1) in the service area, that can provide Early Head Start services to infants, toddlers, and pregnant women residing in Brevard County, Florida.

Funds in the amount of \$1,093,008 annually will be available to provide Early Head Start program services to eligible infants, toddlers, and pregnant women in Brevard County, Florida. This dollar amount includes base funding of \$1,066,683 (for use in program operations, staff, materials, equipment, facilities, etc.) and training and T/TA funding of \$26,325. The appropriate use of T/TA funds for the purposes of improving program quality and supporting children's development are described in Section 645A(g)(2) of the Head Start Act.

Early Head Start regulations allow for a variety of program options and designs. Grantees must use a design or designs that best address the needs of the proposed service area. Grantees have flexibility in determining the appropriate number of children to be served by the various program options (center-based, home-based, or combination) and program designs (hours per

day, days per week, weeks per year).

### **Mortgages and Long-Term Lease Agreements**

If so directed by OHS, the newly funded grantee must accept assignment of any existing mortgages, long-term lease agreements, or security agreements (in the case of a modular unit) on properties subject to a federal interest occupied by the current grantee.

### **Applicant Support Website**

OHS strongly encourages entities interested in applying for this Early Head Start funding opportunity to visit <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/hs/grants>. This interactive website offers a robust collection of resources intended to support organizations in gaining a deeper understanding of the Head Start and Early Head Start programs, the FOA, and evaluation criteria. A profile of current grantee services, equipment, and inventory can also be found through this website located at [www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ohs/funding](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ohs/funding). Finally, the website includes helpful tips for applying via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov). All interested applicants are reminded to frequently refer back to this FOA when preparing their application.

Prospective applicants will also have the opportunity to send questions to OHS by e-mail at [OHS Tech@reviewops.org](mailto:OHS Tech@reviewops.org). A summary of the questions and OHS responses will be posted for public view on the applicant support website as soon as they become available.

Interested applicants may also contact the OHS Operations Center at (888) 242-0684 or TTY: 711 if they have additional questions.

**For more information on application requirements specific to this FOA, please reference Section IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission.**

## **II. Federal Award Information**

|                                 |                               |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Funding Instrument Type:        | Grant                         |
| Estimated Total Funding:        | \$1,093,008                   |
| Expected Number of Awards:      | 1                             |
| Award Ceiling:                  | \$1,093,008 Per Budget Period |
| Award Floor:                    | \$1,093,008 Per Budget Period |
| Average Projected Award Amount: | \$0 Per Budget Period         |
| Anticipated Project Start Date: | 07/01/2016                    |

### **Length of Project Periods:**

60-month project with five 12-month budget periods

## **Additional Information on Awards**

**Awards made under this announcement are subject to the availability of Federal funds.**

### **Expected Number of Awards**

Please note that the expected number of awards represents an estimated **range** of awards that OHS might make as the result of this funding opportunity announcement. If the expected number of awards is 1, applicants are expected to submit proposals for the entire service area. If the expected number of awards is 2 or greater, applicants may submit 1 application to apply to serve either the entire service area, or a portion of the service area.

### **Award Ceiling Disqualification**

Applications requesting an award amount that exceeds the *Award Ceiling* per budget period or per project period, as stated in this section, will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. This disqualification applies only to the *Award Ceiling* listed for the first 12-month budget period for projects with multiple budget periods. If the project and budget period are the same, the disqualification applies to the *Award Ceiling* listed for the project period. Please see *Section III.3. Other, Application Disqualification Factors*.

Inclusion of start-up/pre-award costs in the application submission is not subject to the “Award Ceiling Disqualification.” that is explained in *Section III.3. Other, Application Disqualification Factors*. However, if an applicant does not segregate start-up/pre-award costs from the base funding award request (SF-424, line 18a, Federal), the “Award Ceiling Disqualification” will apply.

**Note:** For those programs that require matching or cost sharing, grantees will be held accountable for projected commitments of non-Federal resources in their application budgets and budget justifications by budget period or by project period for fully funded awards, even if the projected commitment exceeds the required amount of match or cost share. **A grantee’s failure to provide the required matching amount may result in the disallowance of Federal funds.**

Applicants must submit an annual (12-month) budget. The funding amount listed on Line 18a (Federal) of the SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance, must reflect a full 12 months of funding. The federal funding amounts reflected on the SF-424 and in the applicant’s budget submission must match.

The Designation Renewal System (DRS), as established in 45 CFR Part 1307 - Policies and Procedures for Designation Renewal of Head Start and Early Head Start Grantees, went into effect on December 9, 2011. This regulation requires all Head Start and Early Head Start grants be transitioned from indefinite project periods with 12-month budget periods to 5-year grants (60 months with five 12-month budget periods).

Funding provided for the operation of the program is referred to as “base operating funds” or “base funding”; funding provided for training and technical assistance is referred to as “T/TA.”

### **Start-up/Pre-Award Costs**

Pre-award costs, including start-up costs, may be requested by an applicant in addition to the

base operating and T/TA grant funds. If requested, applicants must provide a separate budget for start-up/pre-award costs, in addition to a 12-month budget for the base funding awarded, within the page limitations stated for the *Budget and Budget Justification* in *Section IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission*. If awarded, start-up/pre-award costs would apply to costs incurred up to 90 days prior to the award start date. Examples of start-up activities are facility renovations, purchase of classroom supplies, building purchase, licensing, background checks, etc.

Approval of start-up/pre-award costs is **not** guaranteed; they are negotiated at the time of award and are based on reasonableness, necessity, and the availability of funds. The incurrence of start-up/pre-award costs in anticipation of an award is done at the applicant's own risk and imposes no obligation on ACF either to make an award or to increase the amount of the approved budget if an award is made for less than the amount anticipated and is inadequate to cover the start-up/pre-award costs incurred. It is possible that ACF may honor start-up/pre-award costs by reducing the base amount of the award to include these costs.

**Estimates for start-up/pre-award costs must be separately identified on the SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance, and in the Budget and Budget Justification section of the application.** The start-up/pre-award funding amount must **not** be included in the funding amount listed on Line 18a (Federal) of the SF-424. The funding amount listed in Line 18a of the SF-424 must represent only the total annual federal funding the applicant is requesting for base and T/TA funding. Start-up/pre-award costs, if requested, should be included only on the Other Estimated Funding line (Line 18e) and clearly labeled as "Start-up/Pre-Award Costs" in a separate line item on the SF-424A, Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs. Additionally, if applicants are requesting start-up/pre-award costs, these costs must be easily identified as a separate budget in the Budget and Budget Justification section of the application.

Inclusion of start-up/pre-award costs in the application submission is not subject to the "Award Ceiling Disqualification" that is explained in this section of the announcement and in *Section III.3. Other, Application Disqualification Factors*. However, if an applicant does not segregate start-up/pre-award costs from the base funding award request (SF-424, line 18a, Federal), the "Award Ceiling Disqualification" will apply.

Start-up budgets will be evaluated against the criteria listed in *Section V.I. Criteria*.

**Note:** Costs incurred for grant application preparation are not considered an approved use of pre-award costs and may not be included in the project budget or budget justification.

### **Grant Awards**

Due to the availability of current year appropriated funds, the successful applicant(s) under this FOA *may* receive grant awards with a 5-year project period (60 months) that include 6 budget periods. In cases where a full 12 months of funding is not available at the time of the grant award, the first and sixth budget periods within the 5-year project period will be pro-rated, so that when combined, they equal 12 months of funding. The second, third, fourth, and fifth budget periods would be a full 12 months.

Please see *Section IV.6 Funding Restrictions* for limitations on the use of federal funds awarded under this announcement.

### III. Eligibility Information

#### III.1. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants are any public or private non-profit agencies, including community-based and faith-based organizations, or for-profit agencies pursuant to the Head Start Act Section 641(a)(1), 42 U.S.C. § 9836(a)(1) and Section 645A(d), 42 U.S.C. § 9840A(d).

Eligibility is limited to public or private non-profit organizations, including community-based and faith-based organizations, or local for-profit organizations, or local for-profit agencies, pursuant to Section 641(a)(1) of the Head Start Act, 42 U.S.C. § 9836(a)(1) in the service area that can provide Early Head Start services to children and families residing in Brevard County, Florida.

Applications from individuals (including sole proprietorships) and foreign entities are not eligible and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. See *Section III.3. Other, Application Disqualification Factors*.

Faith-based and community organizations that meet the eligibility requirements are eligible to receive awards under this funding opportunity announcement. Faith-based organizations are encouraged to review the ACF Policy on Grants to Faith-Based Organizations at: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/acf-policy-on-grants-to-faith-based-organizations>.

See *Section IV.2. Legal Status of Applicant Entity* for documentation required to support eligibility.

#### III.2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost Sharing / Matching Requirement: Yes

Grantees are required to meet a non-federal share of the project cost, in accordance with Section 640(b) of the Head Start Act, 42 U.S.C. § 9835 (b).

Grantees must provide at least 20 percent of the total approved cost of the project. The total approved cost of the project is the sum of the ACF (federal) share and the non-federal share. The non-federal share may be met by cash or in-kind contributions, although applicants are encouraged to meet their match requirements through cash contributions. For example, in order to meet the match requirements, a project requesting \$1,093,008.00 in ACF (federal) funds must provide a non-federal share of the approved total project cost of at least \$273,252.00 , which is 20 percent of total approved project cost of \$1,366,260.00 .

**Note:** Grantees will be held accountable for projected commitments of non-federal resources in their application budgets and budget justifications, even when the projected non-federal commitment exceeds the required amount of matching or cost share. A grantee's failure to provide the required matching amount will result in the disallowance of federal funds. However, lack of supporting documentation at the time of application submission will not

exclude the application from competitive review.

### **Waivers**

To receive a waiver or a reduction in the required non-federal share, the applicant must provide ACF with written documentation of need. This request must identify which of the five waiver criteria found at Section 640(b)(1-5) of the Head Start Act it believes to be relevant. It may be submitted with the grant proposal document or during the budget negotiation period. Approval of the waiver request cannot be assumed by the applicant without written notice from ACF. Waiver requests will not result in a deduction of points in the evaluation of the application. In light of the current economic climate, ACF will be receptive to reasonable arguments based on the grounds recognized in the statute for such waivers.

**Please note: The following matching requirement waiver allowed by 48 U.S.C. 1469a(d) is only available to territorial governmental agencies that are applicants or grantees under Early Head Start in the Insular Areas.**

### **Matching Waiver Pursuant to 48 U.S.C. § 1469a(d)**

Matching requirements (including in-kind contributions) of less than \$200,000 (up to \$199,999) are waived under grants made to the governments of American Samoa, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (other than those consolidated under other provisions of 48 U.S.C. 1469) pursuant to 48 U.S.C. 1469a(d). This waiver applies whether the matching required under the grant equals or exceeds \$200,000.

Non-federal resources will be evaluated under criteria found in *Section V.I.* of this announcement.

## **III.3. Other**

### **Application Disqualification Factors**

Applications from individuals (including sole proprietorships) and foreign entities will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

### **Award Ceiling Disqualification**

Applications that request an award amount exceeding the *Award Ceiling* per budget period, or per project period, as stated in *Section II. Federal Award Information*, will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. This disqualification applies only to the *Award Ceiling* listed for first 12-month budget period for projects with multiple budget periods. If the project and budget period are the same, the disqualification applies to the *Award Ceiling* listed for the project period.

Inclusion of start-up/pre-award costs in the application submission is not subject to the "Award Ceiling Disqualification," as explained in *Section II. Federal Award Information*. (See directions for listing these costs in *Section IV.2. Content and Form of Application*)

*Submission, Budget and Budget Justification.*) **However, if an applicant does not segregate start-up/pre-award costs (SF-424 18e, Other) from the base funding award request (SF-424, line 18a, Federal), the "Award Ceiling Disqualification" will apply.**

#### **Application Submission Disqualifications**

ACF requires electronic submission of applications at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov). Applicants that do not have an Internet connection or sufficient computing capacity to upload large documents to the Internet may contact ACF for an exemption that will allow these applicants to submit an application in paper format. Information on requesting an exemption from electronic application submission is found in *Section IV.2. Application Submission Options*.

**The deadline for electronic application submission is 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date listed in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times*.** Electronic applications submitted to [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) after 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date, as indicated by a dated and time-stamped email from [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov), will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. That is, applications submitted to [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov), on or after 12:00 a.m., ET, on the day after the due date will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Applications submitted to [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) at any time during the open application period, and prior to the due date and time, which fail the Grants.gov validation check, will not be received at or acknowledged by ACF.

Each time an application is submitted via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov), the application will receive a new date and time-stamp email. Only those applications with on-time date and time stamps that result in a validated application, which is transmitted to ACF, will be acknowledged.

**The deadline for receipt of paper applications is 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date listed in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times*.** Paper applications received after 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. **Paper applications received from applicants that have not received approval of an exemption from required electronic submission will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.** See "Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission" in *Section IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission*.

Applications that are disqualified under any of these circumstances will receive written notification by letter or by email.

#### **Additional Application Disqualifications**

In accordance with 45 CFR Part 1307, titled "Policies and Procedures for Designation Renewal of Head Start and Early Head Start Grantees," grantees terminated for cause by ACF within 5 years prior to the posting date of this FOA will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

A Head Start or Early Head Start agency that has had a "denial of refunding," defined in 45 CFR § 1303.2, within 5 years prior to the posting date of this FOA will be disqualified from

competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

#### **Notification of Application Disqualification**

Applications that are disqualified under these criteria are considered to be “non-responsive” and are excluded from the competitive review process. Applicants will be notified of a disqualification determination by email or by USPS postal mail within 30 federal business days from the closing date of this funding opportunity announcement.

### **IV. Application and Submission Information**

#### **IV.1. Address to Request Application Package**

Office of Head Start  
OHS Operations Center  
1401 Mercantile Lane  
Suite 401  
Largo, MD 20774  
Phone: (888) 242-0684

#### **Electronic Application Submission:**

The electronic application submission package is available in the FOA's listing at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov).

#### **Applications in Paper Format:**

For applicants that have received an exemption to submit applications in paper format, Standard Forms, assurances, and certifications are available in the Application Package available in the FOA's Grants.gov synopsis at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov). They are also available at <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html#sortby=1>. See *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission* if applicants do not have an Internet connection or sufficient computing capacity to upload large documents (files) to [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov).

#### **Standard Forms that are compliant with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act (29 U.S.C. § 794d):**

Available at the Grants.gov Forms Repository website at <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html#sortby=1>.

#### **Federal Relay Service:**

Hearing-impaired and speech-impaired callers may contact the Federal Relay Service (FedRelay) for assistance at [www.gsa.gov/fedrelay](http://www.gsa.gov/fedrelay).

### **IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission**

## **Formatting the Application Submission**

**All applications must follow the formatting and upload requirements in this section in order for the full application to be reviewed. Failing to adhere to the three-file requirement, page limitations, and/or formatting restrictions will result in part of the application being excluded from review.**

**Applications submitted under this announcement will receive a two-tiered review.** Because of this two-tiered review, it is critical that applicants include information in the correct files, and in the prescribed order, so that the application materials can be reviewed by the appropriate audience. See *Section V.2. Review and Selection Process* for more information on the Phase One and Phase Two reviews.

### ***FOR ALL APPLICATIONS***

#### **Single Application Submission**

Applicants are limited to submitting only one application in response to this funding opportunity announcement. Only the last on-time, application submission will be accepted for review. Electronically submitted applications must be on time and pass the [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) validation process to be accepted for review.

#### **Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR)**

The AOR is the designated representative of the applicant/recipient organization with authority to act on the organization's behalf in matters related to the award and administration of grants. In signing a grant application, this individual agrees that the organization will assume the obligations imposed by applicable federal statutes and regulations and other terms and conditions of the award, including any assurances, if a grant is awarded.

*NOTE:* This definition differs from the definition of an AOR at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov). At [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) the E-Biz POC is the only person who can approve AORs, which allows your organization to authorize specific staff members to submit grants on behalf of the organization.

#### **Point of Contact**

In addition to the AOR, a point of contact on matters involving the application must also be identified. The point of contact, known as the Project Director, should not be identical to the person identified as the AOR. The point of contact must be available to answer any questions pertaining to the application.

#### **Application Checklist**

Applicants may refer to *Section VIII. Other Information* for a checklist of application requirements that may be used in developing and organizing application materials. Details concerning acknowledgment of received applications are available in *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times* of this announcement.

### **Font Size and Margins**

**All narrative documents** (e.g., Project Summary/Abstract, Project Description/Phase One Narrative, Budget and Budget Justification, Phase Two Narrative) **must be in 12-point Times New Roman (TNR) font with 1-inch margins**. All tables, charts, and inserts must also be in TNR 12-point font. Only footnotes may be in TNR 10-point font.

### **Line Spacing**

#### ***Double Spacing:***

**The Project Description/Phase One Narrative and Phase Two Narrative must be double-spaced.** Any non-numerical tables, charts, or inserts must be double-spaced.

#### ***Single Spacing:***

The Project Summary/Abstract, Table of Contents, and Budget and Budget Justification may be single-spaced. *Numerical* budget tables included as part of the application narrative may be single-spaced.

### **Formatting for Appendices (Second File) and Phase Two Attachments (Third File)**

Documents submitted in the Appendices (Second File) and Phase Two Attachments (Third File) must be readable. If the font size is not readable, **all unreadable pages will be removed from the application and will not be reviewed**. For example, pages that contain blurred text or text that is too small to read comfortably will be removed. In addition, applicants are prohibited from submitting two or more pages per page in reduced size on a single page.

### **Enforcement of FOA Formatting, Font, and Page Limitation Requirements**

Applications that exceed the **250-page limitation** will have page(s) removed from the end of the Second File, which includes the Appendices and Phase Two Narrative, before the review. The removed page(s) will not be made available to reviewers.

In instances where formatting and font requirements are not adhered to, ACF uses a formula to recalculate the number of pages the application would include if it conformed to the formatting and font requirements listed in this section. The formula counts the number of characters an applicant uses when following the instructions and using 12-point TNR and compares the resulting number with that of the submitted application. For example, an applicant using TNR, 11-point font, with 1-inch margins all around, and single-spacing, would have an additional 26 lines, or 1,500 characters, per page which is equal to 4/5 of an additional page. Recalculation of pages using this formula may cause applications to exceed the page limitation, which would cause pages to be removed from the end of the Second File, which includes the Appendices and Phase Two Narrative, and excluded from review.

Applications that have more than one scanned page of a document on a single page will have the page(s) removed from the review.

***NOTE:*** Applicants failing to adhere to the FOA formatting, font, and page limitation requirements will receive a letter from ACF notifying them that their

**application was amended. The letter will specify the reason(s) for removal of page(s).**

#### **Page Limitations and File Content**

**The page limitation is 250 pages for the Project Summary/Abstract, Table of Contents, Project Description/Phase One Narrative, Appendices, and Phase Two Narrative.** The Phase Two attachments (financial statements, notes, and audit reports) are not subject to the 250-page limitation when they are included in the Third File as described in the following list. Page limitations are identical for electronic and paper formats application submissions.

**Each applicant is required to upload only three electronic files, excluding Standard Forms (SFs) and OMB-approved forms. Application components MUST be submitted in the prescribed order (see file list) regardless of whether the application is submitted in electronic or paper format. Applications must not exceed the 250-page limit for all of the components in the First and Second Files or pages will be removed from the application and will not be reviewed.**

#### ***First File***

- Project Summary/Abstract (*single-spaced*) – *limited to 1 page*
- Table of Contents (*single-spaced*) – *suggested 1 page*
- Project Description/Phase One Narrative (*double-spaced*) – *suggested 114 pages*
  - Demonstration of Need for Child Development and Health Services:  
Location, Population, and Service Delivery Options
  - Achieving Early Learning and Development Outcomes to Promote School Readiness for Children
  - Past Performance
  - Staffing and Supporting a Strong Early Learning Workforce
  - Organizational Capacity and Governance
  - Budget and Budget Justification

#### ***Second File***

- Appendices (*must be readable*) – *suggested 100 pages*
  - Signed Absence of Non-Compete Agreement Assurance
  - Certificate of Good Standing
  - Proof of Legal Status of Applicant
  - Proof of Policy Council Approval
  - Organizational Capacity documentation (e.g., resumes, job descriptions, organizational charts)
  - Signed memoranda of understanding
  - Third-party agreements
  - Indirect cost rate agreement (IDR)
  - Letters of support
  - Any maps of the service area or lists of Congressional Districts
  - Other supporting documents

- Phase Two Narrative (*double-spaced*) – *suggested 30 pages*

### ***Third File***

- Phase Two attachments (financial statements and notes and audit reports that *must be readable*) – *no page limitation*

### ***ELECTRONIC APPLICATION SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS***

See formatting and font style requirements under “*FOR ALL APPLICATIONS*” earlier in this section.

**Electronic applications will only be accepted via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov). ACF will not accept applications submitted via email or via facsimile.**

***NOTE:*** Only applications that pass the [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) validation check will be received by ACF. Applications that fail the [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) validation check will not be transmitted to ACF. See *Application Validation at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov)* under *Application Submission Options* later in this section.

**Applicants are strongly encouraged to review Grants.gov’s Adobe Software Compatibility page at <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/adobe-software-compatibility.html>.**

### **Adherence to the Three-File Application Format is Required.**

- **No more than three files will be accepted for the review.** Standard Forms (SFs) and OMB-approved forms are not considered additional files. **If four or more files are submitted, all additional files will be removed from the application and excluded from competitive review, even if the total number of pages within all submitted files does not exceed the 250-page limit.**
- **ACF will remove all pages over the 250-page limit from the end of the Second File and exclude those pages from competitive review.** The third file, which may contain only the Phase Two attachments (financial statements and notes and audit reports), is not subject to a page limit.

### **Application Upload Requirements**

ACF strongly recommends that electronic applications be uploaded as Portable Document Files (PDFs). To adhere to the three-file requirement, applicants may need to convert and/or merge documents together using PDF conversion software. Many recent versions of Microsoft Office include the ability to save documents to PDF format without need of additional software. Applicants using the Adobe Professional software suite will be able to merge these documents together. ACF recommends merging documents electronically rather than scanning multiple documents into one document manually, as scanned documents may have reduced clarity and readability. However, ACF understands that all applicants may not have access to this software.

### **Required Standard Forms (SFs) and OMB-Approved Forms**

Standard Forms (SFs) and OMB-approved forms, such as the SF-424 application and budget forms and the SF-P/PSL (Project/Performance Site Location), are uploaded separately at Grants.gov. These forms are submitted separately from the Project Description and Appendices files. See *Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications* for the listing of required Standard Forms, OMB-approved forms, and required assurances and certifications.

### **Naming Application Submission Files**

Applicants should use the following names for their files: FirstFile, SecondFile, and ThirdFile. **Applicants must carefully observe the file naming conventions required by [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov).**

- **Limit file names to 50 characters or less (characters and spaces).**
- **Do not attach any documents with the same name. All attachments should have a unique name.**
- **Use only the following UTF-8 characters when naming your attachments: A-Z, a-z, 0-9, underscore, hyphen, space, period, parenthesis, curly braces, square brackets, ampersand, tilde, exclamation point, comma, semi colon, apostrophe, at sign, number sign, dollar sign, percent sign, plus sign, and equal sign. Attachments that do not follow this rule may cause the entire application to be rejected or cause issues during processing.**

For information on the use of special characters (UTF-8) that are allowed in the application's content, please also see <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/grantors/submitting-utf-8-special-characters.html>.

### **Use only file formats supported by ACF**

It is critical that applicants submit applications using only the supported file formats listed here. While ACF supports all of the following file formats, **we strongly recommend that the three application submission files are uploaded as PDF documents in order to comply with the three file upload limitation.** Documents in file formats that are not supported by Grants.gov or ACF will be removed from the application and will not be used in the competitive review. This may make the application incomplete and ACF will not make any awards based on an incomplete application.

### **ACF supports the following file formats:**

- Adobe PDF – Portable Document Format (.pdf)
- Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx)
- Microsoft Excel (.xls or .xlsx)
- Microsoft PowerPoint (.ppt)
- Corel WordPerfect (.wpd)
- Image Formats (.JPG, .GIF, .TIFF, or .BMP only)

### **Do Not Encrypt or Password-Protect the Electronic Application Files**

If ACF cannot access submitted electronic files because they are encrypted or password protected, the affected file will be removed from the application and will not be reviewed. This removal may make the application incomplete and ACF will not make awards based on an incomplete application.

### **Signatures**

Applicants submitting electronic applications must follow the registration and application submission instructions provided at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov).

### **Policy for Applicants Experiencing Federal Systems Issues**

Applicants that experience issues with federal systems related to application submission, [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) or [SAM.gov](http://SAM.gov), please refer to ACF's "Policy for Applicants Experiencing Federal Systems Issues" document for complete guidance at [https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/assets/systems\\_issue\\_policy\\_final.pdf](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/assets/systems_issue_policy_final.pdf) under "How to Apply for a Grant/Submit an Application."

### ***PAPER APPLICATION SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS***

See formatting and font style requirements under "*FOR ALL APPLICATIONS*" earlier in this section.

The following requirements are only applicable to applications submitted in paper format. Applicants must receive an exemption from ACF in order for a paper format application to be accepted for review. See *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission* later in this section under Application Submission Options for more information.

Required application Standard Forms (SFs), assurances, and certifications are available in the electronic forms package posted on [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) for this FOA.

### **Copies Required**

Applicants must submit one original and two copies of the complete application, including all Standard Forms (SFs) and OMB-approved assurances and/or certifications.

### **Signatures**

An original signature of the AOR is required only on the original copy of paper application submissions. A point of contact on matters involving the application must also be identified on the SF-424 at item 8f. The point of contact, known as the Project Director, should not be identical to the person identified as the AOR.

### **Packaging the Paper Application Submission**

***NOTE:*** Applicants that have an approved exemption to submit their applications in paper format must include a copy of their approved waiver in the application package. The required copy of the approved waiver will not impact the page limitation.

All copies of mailed or hand-delivered paper applications must be submitted in a single package. The package(s) must be clearly labeled for the specific FOA it addresses by FOA title and by Funding Opportunity Number (FON).

Because each application will be duplicated, do not use or include separate covers, binders, clips, tabs, plastic inserts, maps, brochures, or any other items that cannot be processed easily on a photocopy machine with an automatic feed. Do not bind, clip, staple, or fasten in any way separate sections of the application. Applicants are advised that the copies of the application submitted, not the original, will be reproduced by the federal government for review. **All application materials must be one-sided for duplication purposes.** If two-sided pages are submitted, only the "front" page will be used.

All application materials must be submitted on 8 ½" x 11" white paper with 1-inch margins. **All pages of the paper application submission must be sequentially numbered.**

#### Addresses for Submission of Paper Applications

See *Section IV.7. Other Submission Requirements* for addresses for paper application submissions.

#### Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications

**Applicants seeking grant or cooperative agreement awards under this announcement must submit the listed Standard Forms (SFs), assurances, and certifications with the application.** All required Standard Forms, assurances, and certifications are available in the Application Package posted for this funding opportunity at [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov).

Other versions of required Standard Forms, assurances, and certifications are available at Grants.gov [http:// www.grants.gov / web / grants / forms / sf-424- family.html](http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html).

| Forms / Assurances / Certifications   | Submission Requirement   | Notes / Description  |
|---|--|--|
| SF-424 - Application for Federal Assistance   | Submission is required for all applicants by the application due date.   | Required for all applications.   |
| SF-424A Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs / SF-424B Assurances - Non-Construction Programs and | Submission is required for all applicants when applying for non-construction <b>and</b> construction activities under the proposed project. Standard Forms must be used. Standard Forms must | Required for all applications when applying for non-construction and/or construction activities under the proposed project. Please see |

|  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <p>SF-424C - Budget Information Construction Programs / SF-424D - Assurances Construction Programs</p> | <p>be submitted by the application due date.</p>   | <p>special instructions in the <i>Checklist</i> in <i>Section VIII. Other Information</i> in this announcement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Projects that include <b>non-construction and construction</b> activities must submit the SF-424A, B, C, and D, along with the SF-424 and SF-P/PSL.</li> </ul> <p>By signing and submitting the SF-424B and/or SF-424D, applicants are making the appropriate certification of their compliance with all Federal statutes relating to nondiscrimination.</p> |
| <p>DUNS Number (Universal Identifier) and Systems for Award Management (SAM) registration.</p>         | <p>A DUNS number is required of all applicants.</p> <p>To obtain a DUNS number, go to <a href="http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform">http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform</a>.</p> <p>Active registration at the Systems Award Management (SAM) website must be maintained throughout the application and project award period.</p> <p>SAM registration is available at <a href="http://www.sam.gov">http://www.sam.gov</a>.</p> | <p>A DUNS number and SAM registration are eligibility requirements for all applicants.</p> <p>See <i>Section IV.3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)</i> for more information.</p>   |

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| SF-424 Key Contact Form                                     | Submission is required for all applicants by the application due date.   | Required for all applications.   |
| SF-Project/Performance Site Location(s) (SF-P/PSL)          | Submission is required for all applicants by the application due date.   | Required for all applications. In the SF-P/PSL, applicants may cite their primary location and up to 29 additional performance sites.  |
| SF-LLL - Disclosure of Lobbying Activities                  | If submission of this form is applicable, it is due at the time of application. If it is not available at the time of application, it may also be submitted prior to the award of a grant. | If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the applicant shall complete and submit the SF-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions. |
| Certification Regarding Lobbying (Grants.gov Lobbying Form) | Submission required of all applicants with the application package. If it is not submitted with the application package, it must be submitted prior to the award of a grant.               | Submission of the certification is required for all applicants.  |

|   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| Assurance: Absence of Non-compete Agreement | Submission is required for any applicants wishing to receive bonus points under <i>Section V.1. Criteria</i> . The assurance must be submitted with the application package. | A template of this assurance is provided in the <i>Appendix</i> of this announcement. The assurance must be <b>signed</b> by the person who is authorized to sign the application on behalf of the applicant. |
| Certificate of Good Standing                | Submission is recommended for all applicants and will be used to help determine applicant eligibility as described in <i>Section III. Eligibility</i> .                      | A certificate of good standing is a state-issued document that demonstrates that an entity has met its statutory requirements and is authorized to do business in that state.                                 |

### Non-Federal Reviewers

Since ACF will be using non-federal reviewers in the review process, applicants have the option of omitting from the application copies (not the original) specific salary rates or amounts for individuals specified in the application budget as well as Social Security Numbers, if otherwise required for individuals. The copies may include summary salary information. If applicants are submitting their application electronically, ACF will omit the same specific salary rate information from copies made for use during the review and selection process.

## The Project Description

### Part I: The Project Description Overview

The project description provides the majority of information by which an application is evaluated and ranked in competition with other applications for available assistance. The project description should be concise and complete. It should address the activity for which federal funds are being requested. Supporting documents should be included where they can present information clearly and succinctly. In preparing the project description, information that is responsive to each of the requested evaluation criteria must be provided. Awarding offices use this and other information in making their funding recommendations. It is important, therefore, that this information be included in the application in a manner that is clear and complete.

## **General Expectations and Instructions**

ACF is particularly interested in specific project descriptions that focus on outcomes and convey strategies for achieving intended performance. Project descriptions are evaluated on the basis of substance and measurable outcomes, not length. Extensive exhibits are not required. Cross-referencing should be used rather than repetition. Supporting information concerning activities that will not be directly funded by the grant or information that does not directly pertain to an integral part of the grant-funded activity should be placed in an appendix.

## **General Instructions for Preparing a Full Project Description**

### **Introduction**

Applicants that are required to submit a full project description shall prepare the project description statement in accordance with the following instructions while being aware of the specified evaluation criteria. The topics listed in this section provide a broad overview of what the project description should include while the Criteria in *Section V.1.* identify the measures that will be used to evaluate applications.

### **Table of Contents**

List the contents of the application including corresponding page numbers.

### **Project Summary/Abstract**

Provide a summary of the application's project description. The summary must be clear, accurate, concise, and without reference to other parts of the application. The abstract must include a brief description of the proposed grant project including the needs to be addressed, the proposed services, and the population group(s) to be served.

Please place the following at the top of the abstract:

- Project Title
- Applicant Name
- Address
- Contact Phone Numbers (Voice, Fax)
- E-Mail Address
- Web Site Address, if applicable

The project abstract must be single-spaced and limited to one page in length.

### **Objectives And Need For Assistance**

Clearly identify the physical, economic, social, financial, institutional, and/or other problem(s) requiring a solution. The need for assistance, including the nature and scope of the problem, must be demonstrated, and the principal and subordinate objectives of the project must be clearly and concisely stated. Supporting documentation, such as letters of support and testimonials from concerned interests other than the applicant, may be included. Any relevant data based on planning studies or needs assessments should be included or referred to in the endnotes/footnotes. Incorporate demographic data and participant/beneficiary information, as needed. In developing the project description, the applicant may volunteer or be requested to provide information on the total range of projects

currently being conducted and supported (or to be initiated), some of which may be outside the scope of the funding opportunity announcement.

### **Approach**

Outline a plan of action that describes the scope and detail of how the proposed work will be accomplished. Account for all functions or activities identified in the application. Cite factors that might accelerate or decelerate the work and state your reason for taking the proposed approach rather than other approaches. Describe any unusual features of the project such as design or technological innovations, reductions in cost or time, or extraordinary social and community involvement.

Provide quantitative monthly or quarterly projections of the outcomes to be achieved for each function or activity in such terms as the number of people to be served and the number of activities accomplished. Data may be organized and presented as project tasks and subtasks with their corresponding timelines during the project period. For example, each project task could be assigned to a row in the first column of a grid. Then, a unit of time could be assigned to each subsequent column, beginning with the first unit (i.e., week, month, quarter) of the project and ending with the last. Shading, arrows, or other markings could be used across the applicable grid boxes or cells, representing units of time, to indicate the approximate duration and/or frequency of each task and its start and end dates within the project period.

When accomplishments cannot be quantified by activity or function, list them in chronological order to show the schedule of accomplishments and their target dates.

Provide a list of organizations, cooperating entities, consultants, or other key individuals who will work on the project, along with a short description of the nature of their effort or contribution.

### **PHASE ONE**

#### **1. Demonstration of Need for Child Development and Health Services: Location, Population, and Service Delivery Options**

The application must describe the precise geographic location(s) and boundaries of the areas to be served and provide data about why that geographic area is in high need of Early Head Start services, such as the number of eligible infants and toddlers, the extent to which infants and toddlers from low-income families are not meeting school readiness goals, the number of families in extreme poverty, jobless rates, high incidents of community health problems or violence, or other similar factors. Applicants should leverage existing needs assessment and school readiness data for the proposed service area where appropriate and applicable, and if necessary, applications can include other methods to collect data on the need for services such as informal surveys, community meetings, questionnaires, and interviews.

The application must justify the proposed program options as the most appropriate to meet the needs of the community. This includes how many infants, toddlers, and pregnant women will be served; the types of Early Head Start services the applicant will provide; and the number of hours per day, days per week, weeks per year, and home visits that meet the needs of families, including the role of child care partners. Applications that propose the

home-based option must include the proposed number of home visits and socializations. The application must describe how the Early Head Start program will partner with other programs or services in the community to meet the needs of low-income families to be served.

If applicable, the application provides information about proposed delegate agencies, how those delegate agencies were chosen, and how the grantee's oversight will ensure the delegate agencies implement high-quality programs that adhere to the Head Start Program Performance Standards.

In this section, applicants must describe how the number of infants, toddlers, and pregnant women served and the type of services received would be affected if the applicant is awarded a grant to implement the proposed set of services.

Please see *Section V.1. Criteria* for program-specific requirements that are the critical elements that will be evaluated in the application review process.

## **2. Achieving Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children**

The application must demonstrate the capacity to implement and sustain high-quality, comprehensive, individualized educational, health, mental health, nutritional, oral health, and other social services to infants, toddlers, pregnant women, and their families that provide children with the foundations of school readiness. To this end, the applicants must describe how they will implement program components. The application must name the curriculum or set of curricula that will be used, describe why that curriculum/curricula was selected, and present the evidence basis that the curriculum/curricula effectively supports infant and toddler development that is foundational to school readiness. The application also must include information about how the applicant will meet the health, nutrition, and family engagement needs of infants, toddlers, and pregnant women. Applicants must describe how service effectiveness and quality will be measured, monitored, and improved upon over time. The applicant must show how it will use child assessment data and other program data to individualize services and learning opportunities for children and to inform continuous program improvement; how they will provide ongoing professional development, including regular observation and feedback; how they will engage parents in their roles as teachers and advocates for their infants and toddlers; and how they will partner with preschools, including Head Start and local education agencies, child care programs, and other programs serving young children and their families to create continuity for infants, toddlers, and pregnant women across systems.

The application must also describe how the applicant will meet the unique needs of special populations, including infants and toddlers with disabilities, dual language learners, homeless infants, toddlers, and pregnant women, working families, and children in foster care.

The application will be evaluated on the degree to which the proposed program will meet the comprehensive needs of pregnant women, infants, and toddlers in the community, including the special populations described in the previous paragraph. The applicant must provide information about why it made various programmatic choices, including, where applicable, how its choices reflect the best practices in the field and the unique needs of the community it will serve. In addition, the application must propose the coordination of services within a

community that support transitions for children and families in accordance with 45 CFR § 1304.41 of the Head Start Program Performance Standards.

Please see *Section V.1. Criteria* for program-specific requirements that are the critical elements that will be evaluated in the application review process.

### **3. Past Performance**

The applicant provides evidence of organizational experience (including the experience of key leaders in the organization) that supports its ability to implement a comprehensive child development program for infants, toddlers, and pregnant women. Applicants must demonstrate that they will operate a high-functioning program with a competent management team and effective systems with demonstrated capacity to use data to inform continuous improvement in such areas as professional development, instructional practices, and family engagement.

The application must provide detailed information about how the applicant's past experience in early education (or related fields) and in communities similar to the targeted community will enable them to operate a successful Early Head Start program. The application must provide evidence of the quality of the early education programs or related programs they have operated in the past. The applicant must demonstrate their capacity and experience serving pregnant women, infants, toddlers, and/or preschool-age children. The applicant must provide evidence of the quality of services to be provided based on licensing, accreditation, ratings, or independent evaluations of programs, outcome data for children, or other information provided.

The application must also provide information about the past experience of organizations with which it proposes to delegate all or part of its services to infants, toddlers, pregnant women, and families. The applicant must include a description of any violations, such as deficiencies, areas of non-compliance, and/or audit findings. Applicants must describe the actions they have taken to address any violations. Please note that if the applicant is a current or former Head Start or Early Head Start grantee, ACF will retrieve and review the grantee's last two OHS triennial monitoring reports, plus any other OHS monitoring reports issued in the 5 years preceding the posting of this FOA.

The application must explain the ways (if any) in which their past experience – or the past experience of any delegate agencies – differs from operating an Early Head Start program, both generally and as compared to the program the applicant is proposing to implement. The applicant must discuss how it will address these differences and succeed in providing effective, high-quality, comprehensive Early Head Start services.

Please see *Section V.1. Criteria* for program-specific requirements that are the critical elements that will be evaluated in the application review process.

### **4. Staffing and Supporting a Strong Early Learning Workforce**

The application must describe the qualifications and experience of the applicant staff in planning, organizing, and providing comprehensive child development services at the

community level. The application must address: (1) how the applicant will facilitate strong educator-child relationships that support infant and toddler development; (2) how it will ensure that staff are prepared for and supported in implementing evidence-based instructional practices that are individualized based on the ongoing assessment of each child to support positive child outcomes; and (3) how it will ensure that all staff will successfully partner with families in supporting children's development. The application also must describe how the applicant will attract and retain qualified staff; how it will support staff through the regular provision of feedback, supervision, coaching, and other mechanisms; and how it will assess staff performance and address under-performing staff.

The application also must describe the management staff's knowledge of Head Start's broad requirements and how it will ensure that all program staff members understand how those standards are applicable to them.

Please see *Section V.1. Criteria* for program-specific requirements that are the critical elements that will be evaluated in the application review process.

## **5. Organizational Capacity and Governance**

This section measures the applicant's ability to effectively implement and oversee operations that comply with applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations. The applicant describes its internal systems for communication, record-keeping, reporting, and ongoing monitoring. The application provides evidence of past success in organizational management and successful governance.

Applicants must also demonstrate capacity to effectively implement a system of governance, taking into account the ultimate responsibility of the agency Board and the crucial role of the Policy Council and parents in decision making. The applicant provides information about how its current governance structure would change (if at all) to meet the Head Start Program Performance Standards.

The application describes mechanisms for ensuring fiscal integrity, timely implementation of services, and strong coordination with broader early childhood systems.

Please see *Section V.1. Criteria* for program-specific requirements that are the critical elements that will be evaluated in the application review process.

## **PHASE TWO**

Phase Two is a financial review that will be performed by financial experts contracted by ACF. This review will be used to determine risk and whether an applicant should be considered as Low (low-to-no risk), Moderate (some minor deficiencies are determined), or High (high risk).

This review will not change the Phase One scores determined by the objective review panel, but will assist ACF in making award decisions.

The financial review of Head Start applicants serves to determine the financial capabilities of an applicant based on information provided in the application package, including submitted

financial statements adhering to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and/or audit reports or statements from Certified Public Accountants or Licensed Public Accountants, and single or program-specific annual audits under 2 CFR 200.

Applicants **must** submit a narrative response that addresses all of the following elements.

### **Internal Control, Compliance, and Ethical Values**

Each applicant shall:

- Describe its policies and procedures to achieve compliance with all post-award requirements (45 CFR 75.300 through 45 CFR 75.391).
- Describe its ability to meet the 15 percent limitation on development and administrative costs (45 CFR § 1301.32).
- Describe its commitment to high ethical standards in relation to written policies and programs inherent within the organization.
- Describe its Accounting Policies and Procedures.

Each applicant shall:

- Describe how it uses a logical and consistent method for the allocation of indirect costs to intermediate and final cost objectives.
- If the applicant has an indirect rate agreement:
  - Reference the indirect rate agreements.
  - Identify the process for the collection of indirect costs, calculation of rate(s), and the application or allocation of costs to specific grants.
- If the applicant uses the direct allocation method:
  - Describe its process for identifying and prorating joint costs using a base that is most appropriate to the particular element of cost that is being prorated.
- Describe how Head Start resources will be combined with other early childhood funding sources, if applicable, and describe how it will properly allocate costs.

### **Additional Information**

Each applicant shall:

- State whether the applicant received a Qualified, Disclaimer, or Adverse audit opinion in the past 2 years for any federal grant program.
- State whether or not the materially non-compliant finding(s), which caused the Qualified, Disclaimer, or Adverse audit opinion, have been resolved.

In addition, applicants **must** submit their most recent fiscal year's financial statements and related notes to the financial statements adhering to GAAP and the last year's audit reports or statements from Certified Public Accountants or Licensed Public Accountants.

### **Geographic Location**

Describe the precise location of the project and boundaries of the area to be served by the proposed project. Maps or other graphic aids may be attached.

### **Legal Status of Applicant Entity**

Applicants must provide the following documentation of their legal status:

Legal Status means being established as a public agency under state law or a non-profit under state or federal law. ACF will accept proof of status as a for-profit organization under state or federal law.

Non-profit organizations applying for funding are required to submit proof of their non-profit status. Proof of non-profit status is any one of the following:

- A reference to the applicant organization's listing in the IRS's most recent list of tax-exempt organizations described in the IRS Code.
- A copy of a currently valid IRS tax-exemption certificate.
- A statement from a state taxing body, state attorney general, or other appropriate state official certifying that the applicant organization has non-profit status and that none of the net earnings accrue to any private shareholders or individuals.
- A certified copy of the organization's certificate of incorporation or similar document that clearly establishes non-profit status.
- Any of the items in the subparagraphs immediately above for a state or national parent organization and a statement signed by the parent organization that the applicant organization is a local non-profit affiliate.

Unless directed otherwise, applicants must include proof of non-profit status in the *Appendices* file of the electronic application submission.

### **Additional Eligibility Documentation**

Applicants must provide the additional, required documentation, or required credentials, to support eligibility for an award, as described in *Section III. Eligibility Information* of this announcement:

### **Current Head Start and Early Head Start Grantees**

Proof of policy council approval of the application must be provided as required by section 642(c)(2)(D)(iii) of the Head Start Act and 45 CFR § 1304.50(d)(1)(i).

### **Sole Proprietorships**

Applicants that are for-profit organizations must provide the additional required documentation to support eligibility for an award, as described in *Section III. Eligibility Information* of this announcement:

- A current list of board members and organizational documents that require the establishment and maintenance of a board of directors.

### **Organizational Capacity**

- Organizational charts;
- Resumes (no more than two single-spaced pages in length);
- Biographical Sketches (short narrative description);
- List of Board of Directors;
- Copy or description of the applicant organization's fiscal control and accountability procedures;
- Evidence that the applicant organization, and any partnering organizations, have relevant experience and expertise with administration, development, implementation, management, and evaluation of programs similar to that offered under this announcement;
- Evidence that each participating organization, including partners and/or subcontractors, possess the organizational capability to fulfill their role(s) and function(s) effectively;
- Information on compliance with federal/state/local government standards;
- Job descriptions for each vacant key position.

### **Protection of Sensitive and/or Confidential Information**

If any confidential or sensitive information will be collected during the course of the project, whether from staff (e.g., background investigations) or project participants and/or project beneficiaries, provide a description of the methods that will be used to ensure that confidential and/or sensitive information is properly handled and safeguarded. Also provide a plan for the disposition of such information at the end of the project period.

### **Third-Party Agreements**

Provide written and signed agreements between grantees and subgrantees, or subcontractors, or other cooperating entities. These agreements must detail the scope of work to be performed, work schedules, remuneration, and other terms and conditions that structure or define the relationship.

### **Letters Of Support**

Provide statements from community, public, and commercial leaders that support the project proposed for funding. All submissions should be included in the application package or by the application deadline.

### **Plan for Oversight of Federal Award Funds**

Provide a plan describing how oversight of federal funds will be ensured and how grant activities and partner(s) will adhere to applicable federal and programmatic regulations. Applicants must identify staff that will be responsible for maintaining oversight of program activities, staff, and partner(s). Applicants must describe procedures and policies used to oversee staff and/or partners/contractors.

Describe organizational records systems that relate financial data to performance data by identifying the source and application of federal funds so that they demonstrate effective control over and accountability for funds, compare outlays with budget amounts, and provide accounting records supported by source documentation.

## **The Project Budget and Budget Justification**

All applicants are required to submit a project budget and budget justification with their application. The project budget is input on the Budget Information Standard Form, either SF-424A or SF-424C. The budget justification is a line-item detail that includes detailed calculations for "object class categories" identified on the Budget Information Standard Form. Calculations must include estimation methods, quantities, unit costs, and other similar quantitative detail sufficient for the calculation to be duplicated. If matching or cost sharing is a requirement, applicants must include a detailed listing of any funding sources identified in Block 18 of the SF-424 (Application for Federal Assistance).

Project budget calculations must include estimation methods, quantities, unit costs, and other similar quantitative detail sufficient for the calculation to be duplicated. If matching or cost sharing is a requirement, applicants must include a detailed listing of any funding sources identified in Block 18 of the SF-424 (Application for Federal Assistance). See the table in *Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications* listing the appropriate budget forms to use in this application.

***Special Note:*** *The Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015 (Pub.L. 113-235), enacted December 16, 2014, limits the salary amount that may be awarded and charged to ACF grants and cooperative agreements. Award funds issued under this announcement may not be used to pay the salary, or any percentage of salary, to an individual at a rate in excess of Executive Level II. The Executive Level II salary of the Federal Executive Pay scale is \$183,300. Please see <http://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/salaries-wages/2015/executive-senior-level>. This amount reflects an individual's base salary exclusive of fringe benefits and any income that an individual may be permitted to earn outside of the duties to the applicant organization. This salary limitation also applies to subawards/subcontracts under a ACF grant or cooperative agreement.*

Provide a budget using the 424A and/or 424C, as applicable, for each year of the proposed project. Provide a budget justification, which includes a budget narrative and a line-item detail, for the first year of the proposed project. The budget narrative should describe how the categorical costs are derived. Discuss the necessity, reasonableness, and allocation of the proposed costs.

**Please see *Section V.1. Criteria* for program-specific requirements that are the critical elements that will be evaluated in the application review process.**

Please see *Section III.2. Cost Sharing or Matching* for information on the matching requirement.

Applicants may only request funding up to the *Award Ceiling* listed in *Section II. Federal Award Information*, which is inclusive of base and T/TA funding.

### **Start-up/Pre-Award Costs**

In the operation of an Early Head Start program, applicants should consider supplementing federal funds with resources from other early childhood programs or funding streams,

including state, local, and private sector funding for child care, pre-Kindergarten, and special education services. Early Head Start funds must be tracked separately.

Applicants requesting start-up funding must submit a separate budget for start-up/pre-award costs as described in *Section II. Federal Award Information*.

## **General**

Use the following guidelines for preparing the budget and budget justification. When a match or cost share is required, both federal and non-federal resources must be detailed and justified in the budget and budget narrative justification. "Federal resources" refers only to the ACF grant funds for which the applicant is applying. "Non-federal resources" are all other non-ACF federal and non-federal resources. It is suggested that budget amounts and computations be presented in a columnar format: first column, object class categories; second column, federal budget; next column(s), non-federal budget(s); and last column, total budget. The budget justification should be in a narrative form.

## **Personnel**

Description: Costs of employee salaries and wages.

Justification: Identify the project director or principal investigator, if known at the time of application. For each staff person, provide: the title; time commitment to the project in months; time commitment to the project as a percentage or full-time equivalent; annual salary; grant salary; wage rates; etc. Do not include the costs of consultants, personnel costs of delegate agencies, or of specific project(s) and/or businesses to be financed by the applicant.

## **Fringe Benefits**

Description: Costs of employee fringe benefits unless treated as part of an approved indirect cost rate.

Justification: Provide a breakdown of the amounts and percentages that comprise fringe benefit costs such as health insurance, Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA) taxes, retirement insurance, taxes, etc.

## **Travel**

Description: Costs of project-related travel by employees of the applicant organization. (This item does not include costs of consultant travel.)

Justification: For each trip show: the total number of traveler(s); travel destination; duration of trip; per diem; mileage allowances, if privately owned vehicles will be used to travel out of town; and other transportation costs and subsistence allowances. If appropriate for this project, travel costs for key staff to attend ACF-sponsored workshops should be detailed in the budget.

## **Equipment**

Description: "Equipment" means an article of nonexpendable, tangible personal property having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost that equals or exceeds the lesser of: (a) the capitalization level established by the organization for the financial statement purposes, or (b) \$5,000. (Note: Acquisition cost means the net invoice unit price of an item of equipment, including the cost of any modifications, attachments, accessories, or auxiliary apparatus necessary to make it usable for the purpose for which it is acquired. Ancillary charges, such as taxes, duty, protective in-transit insurance, freight, and installation, shall be included in, or excluded from, acquisition cost in accordance with the organization's regular written accounting practices.)

Justification: For each type of equipment requested provide: a description of the equipment; the cost per unit; the number of units; the total cost; and a plan for use on the project; as well as use and/or disposal of the equipment after the project ends. An applicant organization that uses its own definition for equipment should provide a copy of its policy, or section of its policy, that includes the equipment definition.

### **Supplies**

Description: Costs of all tangible personal property other than that included under the Equipment category.

Justification: Specify general categories of supplies and their costs. Show computations and provide other information that supports the amount requested.

### **Contractual**

Description: Costs of all contracts for services and goods except for those that belong under other categories such as equipment, supplies, construction, etc. Include third-party evaluation contracts, if applicable, and contracts with secondary recipient organizations, including delegate agencies and specific project(s) and/or businesses to be financed by the applicant.

Justification: Demonstrate that all procurement transactions will be conducted in a manner to provide, to the maximum extent practical, open and free competition. Recipients and subrecipients, other than states that are required to use 45 CFR Part 92 procedures, must justify any anticipated procurement action that is expected to be awarded without competition and exceeds the simplified acquisition threshold fixed at 41 U.S.C. § 134, currently set at \$100,000. Recipients may be required to make pre-award review and procurement documents, such as requests for proposals or invitations for bids, independent cost estimates, etc. available to ACF.

Note: Whenever the applicant intends to delegate part of the project to another agency, the applicant must provide a detailed budget and budget narrative for each delegate agency, by agency title, along with the same supporting information referred to in these instructions.

### **Construction**

Description: Costs of construction by applicant or contractor.

Justification: Provide a detailed budget and narrative in accordance with the instructions for other object class categories. Identify which construction activities/costs will be contractual and those that the applicant will assume.

### **Other**

Description: Enter the total of all other costs. Such costs, where applicable and appropriate, may include but are not limited to: consultant costs, local travel; insurance; food (when allowable); medical and dental costs (noncontractual); professional services costs (including audit charges); space and equipment rentals; printing and publication; computer use; training costs, such as tuition and stipends; staff development costs; and administrative costs.

Justification: Provide computations, a narrative description, and a justification for each cost under this category.

### **Indirect Charges**

Description: Total amount of indirect costs. This category should be used only when the applicant currently has an indirect cost rate approved by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) or another cognizant federal agency.

Justification: An applicant that will charge indirect costs to the grant must enclose a copy of the current rate agreement. If the applicant organization is in the process of initially developing or renegotiating a rate, upon notification that an award will be made, it should immediately develop a tentative indirect cost rate proposal based on its most recently completed fiscal year, in accordance with the cognizant agency's guidelines for establishing indirect cost rates, and submit it to the cognizant agency. Applicants awaiting approval of their indirect cost proposals may also request indirect costs. When an indirect cost rate is requested, those costs included in the indirect cost pool should not be charged as direct costs to the grant. Also, if the applicant is requesting a rate that is less than what is allowed under the program, the authorized representative of the applicant organization must submit a signed acknowledgement that the applicant is accepting a lower rate than allowed.

### **Program Income**

Description: The estimated amount of income, if any, expected to be generated from this project.

Justification: Describe the nature, source and anticipated use of program income in the budget or refer to the pages in the application that contain this information.

### **Commitment of Non-Federal Resources**

Description: Amounts of non-federal resources that will be used to support the project as identified in Block 18 of the SF-424.

Justification: If an applicant is relying on match from a third party, then a firm commitment of these resources (letter(s) or other documentation) is required to be submitted with the application. Detailed budget information must be provided for every funding source

identified in Item 18. "Estimated Funding (\$)" on the SF-424.

**Note:** Applicants are required to fully identify and document in their applications the specific costs or contributions they propose in order to meet a matching or cost-sharing requirement. Applicants are also required to provide documentation in their applications on the sources of funding or contribution(s) and, for in-kind contributions, a justification of how the stated valuation was determined. Matching or cost sharing must be documented by budget period or by project period for fully funded awards. **A grantee's failure to provide the required matching amount may result in the disallowance of federal funds.** Lack of supporting documentation at the time of application submission will not disqualify the application from competitive review; however, it may impact an application's scoring under the evaluation criteria in *Section V.I.* of this announcement.

### **Paperwork Reduction Disclaimer**

As required by the Paperwork Reduction Act, 44 U.S.C. §§ 3501-3521, the public reporting burden for the Project Description is estimated to average 40 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and reviewing the collection information. The Project Description information collection is approved under OMB control number 0970-0139, which expires 11/30/2015. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

## **Application Submission Options**

### **Electronic Submission via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov)**

- Additional guidance on the submission of electronic applications can be found at <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html>.
- If applicants encounter any technical difficulties in using [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov), contact the Grants.gov Contact Center at: 1-800-518-4726, or by email at [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov), to report the problem and obtain assistance. Hours of Operation: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The Grants.gov Contact Center is closed on federal holidays.
- Applicants should always retain Grants.gov Contact Center service ticket number(s) as they may be needed for future reference.
- **Contact with the Grants.gov Contact Center prior to the listed application due date and time does not ensure acceptance of an application. If difficulties are encountered, the Grants Management Officer listed in *Section VII. HHS Awarding Agency Contact(s)* will determine whether the submission issues are due to Grants.gov system errors or user error.**

### **Application Validation at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov)**

After an application has been successfully submitted to [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov), it still must pass a series of validation checks. After an application is submitted, Grants.gov generates a submission receipt via email and also sets the application status to "Received." This receipt verifies that the application has been successfully delivered to the Grants.gov system.

Next, Grants.gov verifies the submission is valid by ensuring it does not contain viruses, the opportunity is still open, and the applicant login and applicant DUNS number match. If the submission is valid, Grants.gov generates a submission validation receipt via email and sets the application status to "Validated."

If the application is not validated, the application status is set to "Rejected." The system sends a rejection email notification to the applicant and the applicant must re-submit the application package. See "What to Expect After Submitting" at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) for more information.

Each time an application is submitted, or resubmitted, via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov), the application will receive a new date and time stamp. Only those applications with on-time date and time stamps that result in a validated application, which are transmitted to ACF, will be acknowledged.

Applicants will be provided with an acknowledgement from Grants.gov that the submitted application package has passed, or failed, a series of checks and validations. Applications that are submitted on time that fail the validation check will not be transmitted to ACF and will not be acknowledged.

**NOTE:** The Grants.gov validation check can affect whether the application is accepted for review. If an application fails the Grants.gov validation check and is not resubmitted by 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date, it will not be transmitted to ACF and will be excluded from the review.

Similarly, if an applicant resubmits their application to Grants.gov by 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date, and the resubmitted application does not pass the validation check, it will not be transmitted to ACF and will be excluded from the review.

### **Systems Issues**

For any systems issues experienced with Grants.gov or SAM.gov, please refer to ACF's "Policy for Applicants Experiencing Federal Systems Issues" document for complete guidance at [https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/assets/systems\\_issue\\_policy\\_final.pdf](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/assets/systems_issue_policy_final.pdf).

### **Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission**

ACF recognizes that some applicants may have limited or no Internet access, and/or limited computer capacity, which may prohibit them from uploading large files at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov). To accommodate such applicants, ACF offers an exemption from required electronic submission. The exemption will allow applicants to submit hard copy, paper applications by hand-delivery, applicant courier, overnight/express mail couriers, or by other representatives of the applicant.

To receive an exemption from required electronic application submission, applicants must submit a written request to ACF that must state that the applicant qualifies for the exemption for one of the two following reasons:

- Lack of Internet access or Internet connection, or
- Limited computer capacity that prevents the uploading of large documents (files) at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov).

Applicants may request and receive the exemption from required electronic application submission by either:

- Submitting an email request to [electronicappexemption@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:electronicappexemption@acf.hhs.gov), or
- Sending a written request to the Office of Grants Management Contact listed in *Section VII. HHS Awarding Agency Contact(s)* in this announcement.

Requests for exemption from required electronic application submission will be acknowledged with an approval or disapproval.

Requests that do not state one of the two listed reasons will not be approved.

An exemption is applicable to all applications submitted by the applicant organization during the Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) in which it is received. Applicants need only request an exemption once in a FFY. Applicants must request a new exemption from required electronic submission for any succeeding FFY.

**Please Note:** [electronicappexemption@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:electronicappexemption@acf.hhs.gov) **may only be used to request an exemption from required electronic submission.** All other inquiries must be directed to the appropriate Agency Contact listed in *Section VII.* of this announcement. Queries or requests submitted to this email address for any reason other than a request for an exemption from electronic application submission will not be acknowledged or answered.

All exemption requests must include the following information:

- Funding Opportunity Announcement Title,
- Funding Opportunity Number (FON),
- The listed Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number,
- Name of Applicant Organization and DUNS Number,
- AOR name and contact information,
- Name and contact information of person to be contacted on matters involving the application (i.e., the Point of Contact), and
- The reason for which the applicant is requesting an exemption from electronic application submission. The request for exemption must state one of the following two reasons: 1) lack of Internet access or Internet connection; or 2) lack of computer capacity that prevents uploading large documents (files) to the Internet.

**Exemption requests must be *received* by ACF no later than two weeks before the application due date**, that is, 14 calendar days prior to the application due date listed in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times*. If the fourteenth calendar day falls on a weekend or federal holiday, the due date for receipt of an exemption request will move to the next federal business day that follows the weekend or federal holiday.

Applicants may refer to *Section VIII. Other Information* for a checklist of application requirements that may be used in developing and organizing application materials. Details concerning acknowledgment of received applications are available in *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times* of this announcement.

### **Paper Format Application Submission**

**An exemption is now required for the submission of paper applications. See the preceding section on "*Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission.*"**

Applicants with exemptions that submit their applications in paper format, by mail or delivery, must submit one original and two copies of the complete application with all attachments. The original and each of the two copies must include all required forms, certifications, assurances, and appendices, be signed by the AOR, and be unbound. The original copy of the application must have original signature(s). See *Section IV.7.* of this announcement for address information for paper format application submissions. Applications submitted in paper format must be received by 4:30 p.m, ET, on the due date.

Applicants may refer to *Section VIII. Other Information* for a checklist of application requirements that may be used in developing and organizing application materials. Details concerning acknowledgment of received applications are available in *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times* in this announcement.

### **IV.3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)**

All applicants must have a DUNS Number ([http:// fedgov. dnb.com /webform](http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform)) and an active registration with the Central Contractor Registry (CCR) on the System for Award Management (SAM.gov/SAM, [www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov)).

Obtaining a DUNS Number may take 1 to 2 days.

All applicants are required to maintain an active SAM registration until the application process is complete. If a grant is awarded, registration at SAM must be active throughout the life of the award.

**Plan ahead. Allow at least 10 business days after you submit your registration for it to become active in SAM and at least an additional 24 hours before that registration information is available in other government systems, i.e. Grants.gov.**

This action should allow you time to resolve any issues that may arise. Failure to comply with these requirements may result in your inability to submit your application through Grants.gov or prevent the award of a grant. Applicants should maintain documentation (with dates) of your efforts to register for, or renew a registration, at SAM. User Guides are available under the "Help" tab at <https://www.sam.gov>.

HHS requires all entities that plan to apply for, and ultimately receive, federal grant funds from any HHS Agency, or receive subawards directly from recipients of those grant funds to:

- Be registered in the SAM prior to submitting an application or plan;
- Maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active award or an application or plan under consideration by an OPDIV; and
- Provide its active DUNS number in each application or plan it submits to the OPDIV.

ACF is prohibited from making an award until an applicant has complied with these requirements. At the time an award is ready to be made, if the intended recipient has not complied with these requirements, ACF:

- May determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive an award; and
- May use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant.

#### **IV.4. Submission Dates and Times**

Due Date for Applications: **11/30/2015**

##### **Explanation of Due Dates**

The due date for receipt of applications is listed in the *Overview* section and in this section. See *Section III.3. Other, Application Disqualification Factors*.

##### **Electronic Applications**

The deadline for submission of electronic applications via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) is 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date. Electronic applications submitted at 12:00 a.m., ET, on the day after the due date will be considered late and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Applicants are required to submit their applications electronically via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) unless they received an exemption through the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*.

ACF does not accommodate transmission of applications by email or facsimile.

Instructions for electronic submission via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) are available at: [http://www.grants.gov/applicants/apply\\_for\\_grants.jsp](http://www.grants.gov/applicants/apply_for_grants.jsp).

Applications submitted to [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) at any time during the open application period prior to the due date and time that fail the Grants.gov validation check will not be received at ACF. These applications will not be acknowledged.

### **Mailed Paper Format Applications**

The deadline for mailed paper applications is 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date. Mailed paper applications received after the due date and deadline time will be considered late and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Paper format application submissions will be disqualified if the applicant organization has not received an exemption through the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*.

### **Hand-Delivered Paper Format Applications**

Applications that are hand-delivered by applicants, applicant couriers, by overnight/express mail couriers, or other representatives of the applicant must be received on, or before, the due date listed in the *Overview* and in this section. These applications must be delivered between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., ET, Monday through Friday (excluding federal holidays). Applications should be delivered to the address provided in *Section IV.7. Other Submission Requirements*.

Hand-delivered paper applications received after the due date and deadline time will be considered late and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Hand-delivered paper format application submissions will be disqualified if the applicant organization has not received an exemption through the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*.

### **No appeals will be considered for applications classified as late under the following circumstances:**

- Applications submitted electronically via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) are considered late when they are dated and time-stamped after the deadline of 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date.
- Paper format applications received by mail or hand-delivery after 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date will be classified as late and will be disqualified.
- Paper format applications received from applicant organizations that were not approved for an exemption from required electronic application submission under the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Submission* will be disqualified.

### **Extensions and/or Waiving Due Date and Receipt Time Requirements**

ACF may extend an application due date and receipt time when circumstances make it impossible for applicants to submit their applications on time. These events include natural disasters (floods, hurricanes, tornados, etc.), or when there are widespread disruptions of electrical service, or mail service, or in other rare cases. The determination to extend or waive due date and/or receipt time requirements rests with the Grants Management Officer listed as the Office of Grants Management Contact in *Section VII. HHS Awarding Agency Contact(s)*.

**Acknowledgement from [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov)**

Applicants will receive an initial email upon submission of their application to [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov). This email will provide a **Grants.gov Tracking Number**. Applicants should refer to this tracking number in all communication with Grants.gov. The email will also provide a **date and time stamp**, which serves as the official record of application's submission. Receipt of this email does not indicate that the application is accepted or that it has passed the validation check.

Applicants will be provided with an acknowledgement from [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) that the submitted application package has passed, or failed, a series of checks and validations. Applications that are submitted on time that fail the validation check will not be transmitted to ACF and will not be acknowledged.

See "What to Expect After Submitting" at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) for more information.

**Acknowledgement from ACF of an electronic application's submission:**

Applicants will be sent additional email(s) from ACF acknowledging that the application has been retrieved from [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) by ACF. Receipt of these emails is not an indication that the application is accepted for competition.

**Acknowledgement from ACF of receipt of a paper format application**

ACF will provide acknowledgement of receipt of hard copy application packages submitted via mail or courier services.

**IV.5. Intergovernmental Review**

This program is covered under Executive Order (E.O.) 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs," and 45 CFR Part 100, "Intergovernmental Review of Department of Health and Human Services Programs and Activities." Under the Executive Order, States may design their own processes for reviewing and commenting on proposed Federal assistance under covered programs.

Applicants should go to the following URL for the official list of the jurisdictions that have elected to participate in E.O. 12372

[http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants\\_spoc/](http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_spoc/).

Applicants from participating jurisdictions should contact their SPOC, as soon as possible, to alert them of their prospective applications and to receive instructions on their jurisdiction's procedures. Applicants must submit all required application materials to the SPOC and indicate the date of submission on the Standard Form (SF) 424 at item 19.

Under 45 CFR 100.8(a)(2), a SPOC has 60 days from the application due date to comment on proposed new awards.

SPOC comments may be submitted directly to ACF to: U.S. Department of Health and

Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Grants Management, Division of Discretionary Grants, 370 L'Enfant Promenade SW., 6th Floor East, Washington, DC 20447.

Entities that meet the eligibility requirements of this announcement are still eligible to apply for a grant even if a State, Territory or Commonwealth, etc., does not have a SPOC or has chosen not to participate in the process. Applicants from non-participating jurisdictions need take no action with regard to E.O. 12372. Applications from Federally-recognized Indian Tribal governments are not subject to E.O. 12372.

#### **IV.6. Funding Restrictions**

Costs of organized fund raising, including financial campaigns, endowment drives, solicitation of gifts and bequests, and similar expenses incurred solely to raise capital or obtain contributions, are considered unallowable costs under grants or cooperative agreements awarded under this funding opportunity announcement.

**Note:** Costs incurred for grant application preparation are not considered allowable costs under an award and may not be included in the project budget or budget justification.

No more than 15 percent of total costs may be used for program administration. An HHS official may grant a waiver of the 15 percent limitation on allowable development and administration costs for an Early Head Start program approving a higher percentage for a specific period of time not to exceed 12 months (45 CFR § 1301.32).

#### **IV.7. Other Submission Requirements**

Submit paper applications to one of the following addresses. Also see Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission.

##### **Submission By Mail**

Office of Head Start  
OHS Operations Center  
1401 Mercantile Lane  
Suite 401  
Largo, MD 20774

##### **Hand Delivery**

Office of Head Start  
OHS Operations Center  
1401 Mercantile Lane  
Suite 401  
Largo, MD 20774

## Electronic Submission

See *Section IV.2.* for application requirements and for guidance when submitting applications electronically via <http://www.Grants.gov>.

For all submissions, see *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times*.

## V. Application Review Information

### V.1. Criteria

**Please note:** Reviewers will not access, or review, any materials that are not part of the application documents. This includes information accessible on websites via hyperlinks that are referenced, or embedded, in the application. Though an application may include web links, or embedded hyperlinks, reviewers will not review this information as it is not considered to be part of the application documents. Nor will the information on websites be taken into consideration in scoring of evaluation criteria presented in this section. Reviewers will evaluate and score an application based on the documents that are presented in the application and **will not** refer to, or access, external links during the objective review.

The review of applications under this FOA is structured in two phases. Phase One will result in a numerical score as evaluated by a panel of non-federal reviewers. Phase Two criteria will **not** be used by reviewers to score applications, but will assist ACF in making award decisions. Please see *Section V.2. Review and Selection Process* for more information on the Phase One and Phase Two reviews.

### PHASE ONE

#### 1. Demonstration of Need for Child Development and Health Services: Location, Population, and Service Delivery Options

Maximum Points:20

Reviewers will evaluate the extent to which the applicant:

1.1. Describes how it will direct Early Head Start resources to the area(s) of greatest need, which must be within the geographic boundaries described in *Section I. Program Description*. The applicant must clearly: a) describe the precise geographic location and boundaries of the area to be served by the proposed project; and b) define the area(s) of greatest need, using information from its community assessment. The applicant must address the needs of special populations, including children with disabilities, dual language learners, homeless children and/or pregnant women, children in foster care, etc.

1.2. Estimates the number of eligible pregnant women, infants, and toddlers by geographic location within the proposed service area.

1.3. Justifies its program option (e.g., center-based, home-based, family child care, or combination option) as the most appropriate to meet the needs of the community. The applicant must specify how it will meet the need for full-day, full-year services in the community, including the planned number of hours per day, days per week, and weeks per year of program operations. The applicant must include the number of children to be served by each option.

- If proposing to serve in multiple communities, the applicant specifies the number of pregnant women, infants and toddlers to be served in each community.
- Applicants proposing the home-based option must include the proposed number of home visits and socializations.
- Applicants may **not** propose double sessions as a program option.
- Programs must provide a minimum of 48 weeks per year for infants and toddlers to ensure the continuity of services that best supports positive outcomes. Applicants proposing to enroll pregnant women must explain how the services will support the needs of expectant families.

1.4. Identifies the proposed delegate agencies, (if proposing to delegate all or part of its responsibility for operating a program with these funds), including the communities in which the applicant will operate, the number of children to be served, and their proposed program option(s). If the applicant is not proposing to delegate with other agencies, this criterion is not applicable.

1.5. Describes its recruitment and selection criteria to ensure it enrolls infants, toddlers, pregnant women and their families most in need in the community. The applicant must describe how the program will ensure that not less than 10 percent of the total number of children enrolled will be children with disabilities.

1.6. Demonstrates community engagement in the geographic locations proposed by the applicant in order to improve the efficiency of service delivery, increase access to needed services, and prevent duplication. Demonstration of community engagement may include memoranda of understanding that provide commitments of exchange of services, resource support, referrals, or other agreements.

1.7. States clearly how many children the applicant is currently serving as a Head Start and/or Early Head Start grantee, delegate agency or partner to a Head Start and/or Early Head Start grantee, or in other early education or related programs. Clearly states how many Head Start and/or Early Head Start children the applicant would serve if awarded this grant.

## 2. Achieving Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children

Maximum Points:40

Reviewers will evaluate the extent to which the applicant:

2.1. Provides a plan to implement a high-quality, comprehensive program for the population the applicant proposes to serve, using a curriculum and teaching practices that promote progress toward infant and toddler school readiness goals and:

- Are based on scientifically valid research;
- Are developmentally appropriate for infants and toddlers;
- Provide continuity of care to promote attachment and a secure foundation for learning in all program options. Explains an approach to staffing continuity across the days, months, and years of service;
- Are aligned with all relevant state early learning guidelines for infants and toddlers, as appropriate, and the *Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework: Ages Birth to Five*.

2.2. Provides plans to coordinate with other state programs and to participate in state systems of early childhood development, including the Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) or the state equivalent. If the applicant participates in QRIS, it must include its rating. If applicable, the applicant explains why it does not participate if there is a QRIS in its geographic area.

2.3. Specifies the name of the curriculum or curricula proposed to be used, why the curriculum was chosen, and the evidence supporting how the curriculum is tied to outcomes for children.

2.4. Discusses what tools it will use to support domains that the selected curriculum does not support. The application describes a process for establishing and measuring school readiness goals, including the plans to address the following domains, as appropriate for the age and developmental needs of enrolled infants and toddlers:

- Approaches to Learning
- Social and Emotional Development
- Language and Literacy
- Cognition
- Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development

School readiness goals must reflect the ages of infants and toddlers that the applicant proposes to serve in the program, must be culturally and linguistically appropriate, and must align with the *Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework: Ages Birth to Five*. The application explains the extent to which school readiness goals were or will be established in consultation with the parents of children who will be participating in the program. Additionally, infant and toddler school readiness goals must reflect the ages of children (birth to 3). The application explains the extent to which goals were or will be established in alignment with state early learning guidelines for infants and toddlers, as appropriate.

2.5. Describes how the applicant will meet the needs of infants and toddlers with disabilities, including procedures to identify such participants, plans to provide trained personnel, and plans to provide services to assist the infants and toddlers in making meaningful progress in attaining age-appropriate knowledge, skills, abilities, and development.

2.6. Describes how the applicant will meet the unique needs of its targeted population, including infants and toddlers in the child welfare system, dual language learners, and homeless infants, toddlers, and pregnant women. The application describes procedures to identify such children, plans to provide trained personnel, and plans to provide services to assist these infants and toddlers in making meaningful progress in attaining age-appropriate knowledge, skills, abilities, and development.

2.7. Describes how the applicant will meet the health, mental health, nutritional, and oral health needs of infants, toddlers, and pregnant women. The application describes the system for health screening and services that will ensure infants and toddlers are accurately referred for necessary follow-up evaluation and treatment within timeframes specified by Head Start regulations. Screening and services for identified needs include,

at a minimum, health, sensory, developmental, and oral health, and may be provided directly or through community partner providers.

2.8. Describes a plan for observing teacher practice, (if proposing center-based or family child care services), including teacher-child interactions. If proposing home-based services, the applicant describes a plan for observing home visitor practice, including interactions with the family and child, and supporting the parents in their role as the child's primary caregiver/teacher. For all program services, the applicant describes using this information to inform professional development and practice improvements. The application includes the name of any instruments to be used.

2.9. Describes a plan to use child assessment data to individualize the instruction and learning for each child and, as necessary, refer for additional evaluation and intervention, and to aggregate and analyze child-level assessment data at least three times per year (except for programs operating less than 90 days, which will be required to do so at least twice within their operating program period) and use that analysis in combination with other program data to determine grantees' progress toward meeting its goals, to inform parents and the community of results, and to direct continuous improvement related to curriculum, instruction, professional development, program design, and other program decisions, in accordance with 45 CFR § 1307.3(b)(2). Applicants are reminded that assessment of infant and toddler development must be developmentally, linguistically, and culturally appropriate and most often involves observation.

2.10. Describes a plan to coordinate with public and private entities that are willing to commit resources to assist the Early Head Start program in providing high-quality child health and developmental services and program management services. Such partnerships must include a plan to coordinate the proposed Early Head Start program with other child care and preschool programs, state pre-kindergarten programs, programs under Part C and Section 619 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and with the educational programs that children to be served will enter upon leaving Early Head Start.

2.11. Describes the system of how the applicant will deliver services to enrolled pregnant women post-pregnancy, and how the newborn infant and family will transition into the appropriate program option at the appropriate time; how the program will support transition from Early Head Start to Head Start or other community-based programs. Additionally, the application describes how the program will support transitions within the Early Head Start program, which might include a child moving from one center or program option to another, adjusting to staff turnover, moving from one classroom to the next, or moving to new grantees in different communities as families move for economic or other reasons. The application describes how the applicant will ensure that infants, toddlers, and their families participating in the Early Head Start program will have the opportunity to receive Head Start or other appropriate preschool services for which they are eligible through the age of mandatory school attendance.

2.12. Describes how the applicant will ensure that infants, toddlers, and their families participating in the program will have the opportunity to receive Head Start or other appropriate preschool services for which they are eligible through the age of mandatory school attendance.

2.13. Provides a plan to facilitate the meaningful engagement of parents (including mothers, fathers, grandparents, foster parents, and kinship caregivers, as appropriate) in activities (at home and, if practicable, at the location of the Early Head Start program) designed to help them become full partners in the education of their children. Such engagement includes participation in the conduct of the program, leadership opportunities, support of the child's development and health, support for the parent-child relationship, opportunities for employment, and other paths to improved financial well-being. The application identifies and addresses barriers to parent participation, such as lack of transportation access or need for child care.

2.14. Explains the plan to implement the Head Start Parent Family and Community Engagement Framework and to offer family literacy and parenting skills training using evidence-based curricula and approaches either directly or through referral to local entities, public and school libraries, and entities carrying out family support programs. The application includes a plan to offer (either directly or through referrals) other support for families struggling with mental health challenges, domestic violence, homelessness, or substance abuse.

### 3. Past Performance

Maximum Points:20

Reviewers will evaluate the extent to which the applicant:

3.1. Demonstrates how the applicant's history and experience, based on past performance providing high-quality early education or other related programs, support its ability to effectively and efficiently administer a project for infants, toddlers, and pregnant women of the size, complexity, and scope of their proposed program. Reviewers will evaluate evidence of experience, such as, but not limited to:

- QRIS rating,
- Record of high performance in the early primary grades by children formerly enrolled in the program,
- Evidence from use of teacher-child interaction rating system,
- Evidence of successful staff development system leading to highly qualified staff, and
- Evidence of high level of success improving family self-sufficiency.

Applicants that serve or have served as delegate agencies to Head Start and Early Head Start grantees must provide documentation of their past performance.

3.2 Documents how the professional experience of the applicant's proposed management team (executive director, program director, managers), based on past performance providing comprehensive, high-quality early care and education, demonstrates an ability to effectively and efficiently administer a project of this size, complexity, and scope within the service area.

3.3. Explains how the applicant's past performance and experience will inform its administration of the Early Head Start program being proposed and will help ensure a high-quality Early Head Start program. To the degree that the applicant is currently operating a program that differs from the Early Head Start program being proposed – such as differences in the target population, the set of services provided, the structure of

the program (the hours, days, or weeks of operation), the mechanisms for quality assurance and improvement, the early learning guidelines to be used, and the performance measurement system – the applicant acknowledges these differences and explains how it will successfully adapt to the differences between its current program and the proposed program.

3.4. Applicants that are current or former Head Start or Early Head Start grantees must include a description of any violations, such as deficiencies, areas of non-compliance, and/or audit findings. These violations should represent findings from the last two OHS triennial monitoring reports plus any other OHS monitoring reports and any audit reports issued in the 5 years preceding the posting of this FOA. Applicants must describe the actions they have taken to address any violations. If the applicant does not have violations, this criterion is not applicable.

#### 4. Staffing and Supporting a Strong Early Learning Workforce Maximum Points:20

Reviewers will evaluate the extent to which the applicant:

4.1. Documents that the proposed program director and proposed key program staff are qualified and knowledgeable about administering complex social service programs or early education services. The applicant describes its key program staff's major functions and responsibilities in the narrative and includes their resumes in the appendix.

4.2. Provides a clear plan to attract and retain qualified staff with the ability to implement a research-based curriculum, aligned with the *Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework: Ages Birth to Five* and state early learning guidelines (as appropriate); effective instructional strategies; and a high-quality, comprehensive program.

4.3. Demonstrates that employees of the agency will meet the requirements of the Head Start Act for staff qualifications set in Section 645A(h) for Early Head Start. The applicant provides documentation showing that all center-based Early Head Start teachers have an Infant Toddler Child Development Associate credential and have been trained (or have equivalent coursework) in early childhood development with a focus on infant and toddler development as required by Section 645A(h) of the Head Start Act. If applicable, the applicant describes how it will hire Early Head Start home visiting staff qualified or trained to conduct home visits that include the full range of comprehensive Early Head Start services.

4.4. Describes the plan to maintain child-to-teacher, home visitor, or family child care provider ratios and family service worker caseloads that comply with appropriate regulations, reflect best practices, and are tied to high-quality service delivery in the event of staff absences or vacancies.

4.5. Describes the plan to provide opportunities for qualified parents and other community residents to seek employment and how these opportunities will be designed to improve the quality of the proposed program. The applicant explains how it will provide career development opportunities for professional, paraprofessional, and other staff.

4.6. Describes a clear plan to evaluate job applicants, including existing grantee staff, to determine which applicants are most capable of contributing to the implementation of a high-quality, comprehensive program, including the implementation of a research-based

curriculum aligned with the *Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework: Ages Birth to Five* and state early learning guidelines, as appropriate.

4.7. Describes an ongoing strategy for professional development, evidence-based coaching and mentoring, supervision, and evaluation of staff and program managers, oriented to improving the skills, knowledge, effectiveness, and career opportunities of all employees.

## 5. Organizational Capacity and Governance

Maximum Points:25

Reviewers will evaluate the extent to which the applicant:

5.1. Provides a plan identifying the capacity of the applicant's senior executive managers (for example, Executive Director, Chief Operating Officer, Chief Financial Officer) and governing board to: (1) exercise effective oversight of program operations and accountability for federal funds; (2) include the Policy Council in the planning and decision-making process; (3) ensure representation of the diverse community served; (4) set and monitor overall agency priorities and operational systems; and (5) conduct community assessment, annual self-assessments, ongoing monitoring, and outcome-based evaluations.

5.2. Explains how its organizational oversight meets the program governance requirements established in Section 642(c) of the Head Start Act. The applicant provides information about how its current governance structure would change (if at all) to meet the Head Start Program Performance Standards.

5.3. Demonstrates the existence of management systems for program planning, internal and external communication, recordkeeping, issuance of internal and external reports, and program self-assessment and monitoring.

5.4. Demonstrates an ability to provide effective financial management in operating an Early Head Start program based on experience.

5.5. Describes plans to meet or exceed state and local requirements concerning licensing for facilities and to be accessible by state and local authorities for purposes of monitoring and ensuring compliance, unless state or local laws prohibit such access. Where facilities are not available, the application provides a plan to acquire facilities in accordance with the requirements provided for the purchase, construction, and major renovation of facilities described in 45 CFR Part 1309.

5.6. Demonstrates the ability to provide timely and efficient implementation of all program components and services immediately upon award, including planning during the transition period; the availability of classroom space and facilities that meets applicable state and local licensing standards; the ability to provide necessary transportation; and the ability to recruit eligible infants, toddlers, and their families.

## 6. Budget and Budget Justification

Maximum Points:15

Reviewers will evaluate the extent to which the applicant:

6.1. Demonstrates that funds are budgeted to provide all required comprehensive Early Head Start services to eligible infants, toddlers, pregnant women, and their families in a cost-effective manner as indicated in the application narrative.

6.2. Demonstrates that start-up/pre-award costs, if proposed, are justified, reasonable, and applicable based on the applicant's proposed Early Head Start program.

Start-up/pre-award costs may include: 1) ensuring that proposed facilities comply with state and local requirements and are adequately equipped, 2) purchasing classroom equipment and supplies, and/or 3) conducting staff background checks. If the applicant is not requesting start-up/pre-award costs, this criterion is not applicable.

6.3. Demonstrates that the applicant will contribute the required non-federal share/match of the total project cost using allowable sources. Identifies each source of non-federal share match, including the estimated amount per source and the valuation methodology.

#### Bonus Points

Maximum Points:10

7.1. In the interest of ensuring a robust competition for high-quality, comprehensive early care and education service providers, ACF is awarding bonus points to any applicants that do not have agreements that prohibit other entities from applying for a Head Start or Early Head Start grant on their own behalf or that impose a penalty on any entity for making such application. Applicants that wish to receive the bonus points must include in the appendices of their applications the **signed** statement included in the *Appendix* of this announcement. The statement must be **signed** by the person who is authorized to sign the application on behalf of the applicant.

#### PHASE TWO

Maximum Points:0

Phase Two is a financial review that will be performed by financial experts contracted by ACF. This review will be used to determine risk and whether an applicant should be considered as Low (low-to-no risk), Moderate (some minor deficiencies are determined), or High (high risk). This review will not change the Phase One scores determined by the objective review panel and points will not be assessed, but the Phase Two review will assist ACF in making award decisions.

The financial review serves to determine the financial capabilities of an applicant based on information provided in the application package, including submitted financial statements adhering to GAAP and/or audit reports or statements from Certified Public Accountants, and single or program-specific annual audits under 2 CFR 200. The financial experts contracted by ACF will review these documents and the narrative response related to Section 2: Financial Management Systems.

**Section 1: Financial Capability** - Evaluates the applicant's ability to sustain operations and perform the planned program. The contracted financial experts will assess an applicant's financial capability based on the applicant's financial statements. Their assessment will cover a variety of criteria primarily focusing on unrestricted net assets (or retained earnings, as applicable), financial statement ratios, access to commercial credit facilities, and diversity of funding sources.

**Section 2: Financial Management Systems** - Evaluates the applicant's ability to properly account for and administer federal funds. The contracted financial experts will review the applicant's narrative response addressing all of the elements listed in *Section IV.2. The Project Description, Approach, PHASE TWO*, and assess the applicant's accounting policies and procedures. In addition, the financial experts will assess the applicant's ability to comply with the types of compliance requirements outlined in 45 CFR Part 75 for non-profit organizations and state and local governments.

**Section 3: Additional Information** - Collects information on the applicants' Single Audit opinions (if applicable) and financial statements for the most recent fiscal year.

## **V.2. Review and Selection Process**

No grant award will be made under this announcement on the basis of an incomplete application. No grant award will be made to an applicant or sub-recipient that does not have a DUNS number ([www.dbn.com](http://www.dbn.com)) and an active registration at SAM ([www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov)). See *Section IV.3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)*.

### **Initial ACF Screening**

Each application will be screened to determine whether it meets any of the disqualification factors described in *Section III.3. Other, Application Disqualification Factors*.

Disqualified applications are considered to be “non-responsive” and are excluded from the competitive review process. Applicants will be notified of a disqualification determination by email or by USPS postal mail within 30 federal business days from the closing date of this funding opportunity announcement.

### **Objective Review and Results**

Applications competing for financial assistance will be reviewed and evaluated by objective review panels using only the criteria described in *Section V.1. Criteria* of this announcement. Each panel is composed of experts with knowledge and experience in the area under review. Generally, review panels include three reviewers and one chairperson.

Results of the competitive objective review are taken into consideration by ACF in the selection of projects for funding; however, objective review scores and rankings are not binding. Scores and rankings are only one element used in the award decision-making process.

ACF may elect not to fund applicants with management or financial problems that would indicate an inability to successfully complete the proposed project. Applications may be funded in whole or in part. Successful applicants may be funded at an amount lower than that requested. ACF reserves the right to consider preferences to fund organizations serving emerging, unserved, or under-served populations, including those populations located in pockets of poverty. ACF will also consider the geographic distribution of federal funds in its award decisions.

ACF may refuse funding for projects with what it regards as unreasonably high start-up costs for facilities or equipment, or for projects with unreasonably high operating costs.

The review process under this FOA is structured into two phases.

### **Phase One**

Phase One is organized around six core elements of effective Head Start and Early Head Start programs that are focused on school readiness and ongoing academic success. Phase One will result in a numerical score as evaluated by a panel of non-federal reviewers. Applications that score highly in the Phase One review will proceed to Phase Two.

### **Phase Two**

Phase Two is a financial review that will be performed by financial experts contracted by ACF. This review will be used to determine risk and whether an applicant should be considered as Low (low-to-no risk), Moderate (some minor deficiencies are determined), or High (high risk). This review will not change the scores or rankings determined by the objective review panel, but will assist ACF in making award decisions.

The financial review of Head Start and/or Early Head Start applicants serves to determine the financial capability of an applicant based on information provided in the application package, including submitted financial statements adhering to GAAP and/or audit reports or statements from Certified Public Accountants/Licensed Public Accountants, and single or program-specific annual audits under 2 CFR 200.

The financial review consists of three sections: Financial Capability, Financial Management Systems, and Additional Information. Please refer to *Section IV.2. The Project Description* and *Section V.1. Criteria* for more information on the Phase Two review.

### **Pre-Award Discussions and Negotiations**

ACF may enter into pre-award discussions and/or negotiations with one or more applicants regarding each applicant's proposed project, budget, organizational capacity, and other information related to their ability to provide high-quality early education and comprehensive services before making final award(s). **Not all pre-award discussions and/or negotiations will result in grant awards.** ACF reserves the right to cease discussions and negotiations with applicants prior to award and may enter into discussions or negotiations with other applicants.

### **Additional Review and Funding Considerations**

The Head Start Act gives priority to organizations based on their ability to serve target populations. In keeping with Section 641(d)(3) of the Head Start Act, HHS shall give priority to applicants for Head Start funding that have demonstrated capacity in providing effective, comprehensive, and well-coordinated early childhood education and development services and programs to children and their families. Section 645A(e) of the Head Start Act gives priority in Early Head Start funding to entities with a record of providing early, continuous, and comprehensive childhood development and family services.

Please note that if the applicant is a current or former Head Start or Early Head Start grantee, ACF will retrieve, review, and consider the grantee's last two OHS triennial monitoring reports. In addition, ACF will retrieve, review, and consider any monitoring reports issued in the 5 years preceding the posting of this FOA. ACF will retrieve, review, and consider any documentation that relates to the fiscal health and financial viability of the applicant. ACF will also retrieve, review, and consider state licensing documentation on the applicant. These

reports and documents may be considered in making final funding determinations.

ACF reserves the right to deny funding to any applicant that is presently designated as "high risk," probationary or not in good standing, or has been debarred or defunded by any federal agency. ACF reserves the right not to fund applicants with unacceptably high federal Head Start per-child costs. Additionally, ACF may decide not to fund projects that would require unreasonably high start-up costs for facilities or equipment or that propose such a low number of children that the project may require unreasonably high operating costs relative to the number of children and families proposed to be served.

Applications proposing a Head Start program that are not from entities "in the community" to be served do not meet the requirements for designation as a Head Start agency in Section 641 of the Head Start Act. ACF will consider all "qualified applicants in such community" as required by Section 641(d) where the application demonstrates that the applicant has an organizational base within the community to be served. This could be established by virtue of the applicant being a provider of services in the community or having a clear relationship to the community as evidenced, for example, by board representation from the community or by evidence of the support of community leaders, including, but not limited to, mayors, city council members, school principals, presidents of local chambers of commerce, county government officials, social service provider organizations, community organizations representing low-income, minority, or other relevant sectors of the community, including child care providers and organizations.

Please refer to *Section IV.2.* of this announcement for information on non-federal reviewers in the review process.

### **Approved but Unfunded Applications**

Applications recommended for approval that were not funded under the competition because of the lack of available funds may be held over by ACF and reconsidered in a subsequent review cycle if a future competition under the program area is planned. These applications will be held over for a period of up to one year and will be re-competed for funding with all other competing applications in the next available review cycle. For those applications that have been deemed as approved but unfunded, notice will be given of such determination by postal mail.

## **V.3. Anticipated Announcement and Federal Award Dates**

Announcement of awards and the disposition of applications will be provided to applicants at a later date.

## **VI. Federal Award Administration Information**

### **VI.1. Federal Award Notices**

Successful applicants will be notified through the issuance of a Notice of Award (NoA) that sets forth the amount of funds granted, the terms and conditions of the grant, the effective date of the grant, the budget period for which initial support will be given, the non-federal share to be provided (if applicable), and the total project period for which support is contemplated. The NoA will be signed by the Grants Officer and transmitted via postal mail, email, or by GrantSolutions.gov or the Head Start Enterprise System (HSES), whichever is relevant. Following the finalization of funding decisions, organizations whose applications will not be funded will be notified by letter signed by the cognizant Program Office head. Any other correspondence that announces to a Principal Investigator, or a Project Director, that an application was selected is not an authorization to begin performance.

Project costs that are incurred prior to the receipt of the NoA are at the recipient's risk and may be reimbursed only to the extent that they are considered allowable as approved pre-award costs. Information on allowable pre-award costs and the time period under which they may be incurred is available in *Section IV.6. Funding Restrictions*.

## **VI.2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements**

Awards issued under this announcement are subject to 45 CFR Part 75 - Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for HHS Awards. The Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) is available at <http://www.gpo.gov>.

An application funded with the release of federal funds through a grant award does not constitute, or imply, compliance with federal regulations. Funded organizations are responsible for ensuring that their activities comply with all applicable federal regulations.

### **Prohibition Against Profit**

Grantees are subject to the limitations set forth in 45 CFR § 75.215, Special provisions for awards to commercial organizations as recipients (45 CFR § 75.215(b)\_Prohibition against profit.), which states that, "...no HHS funds may be paid as profit to any recipient even if the recipient is a commercial organization. Profit is any amount in excess of allowable direct and indirect costs."

### **Equal Treatment for Faith-Based Organizations**

Grantees are also subject to the requirements of 45 CFR § 87.1(c), Equal Treatment for Faith-Based Organizations, which says, "Organizations that receive direct financial assistance from the [Health and Human Services] Department under any Department program may not engage in inherently religious activities such as worship, religious instruction, or proselytization, as part of the programs or services funded with direct financial assistance from the Department." Therefore, organizations must take steps to completely separate the presentation of any program with religious content from the presentation of the Federally funded program by time or location *in such a way that it is clear that the two programs are separate and distinct*. If separating the two programs by time but presenting them in the same location, one program must *completely* end before the other program begins.

A faith-based organization receiving HHS funds retains its independence from federal, state, and local governments, and may continue to carry out its mission, including the definition, practice, and expression of its religious beliefs. For example, a faith-based organization may use space in its facilities to provide secular programs or services funded with federal funds without removing religious art, icons, scriptures, or other religious symbols. In addition, a faith-based organization that receives federal funds retains its authority over its internal governance, and it may retain religious terms in its organization's name, select its board members on a religious basis, and include religious references in its organization's mission statements and other governing documents in accordance with all program requirements, statutes, and other applicable requirements governing the conduct of HHS-funded activities.

Regulations pertaining to the Equal Treatment for Faith-Based Organizations, which includes the prohibition against federal funding of inherently religious activities, "Understanding the Regulations Related to the Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships Initiative" are available at <http://www.hhs.gov/partnerships/about/regulations/>. Additional information, resources, and tools for faith-based organizations is available through The Center for Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships website at <http://www.hhs.gov/partnerships/index.html> and at the <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ocs/resource/capacity-building-toolkits-for-faith-based-and-community-organizations>.

#### **Award Term and Condition under the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000**

Awards issued under this announcement are subject to the requirements of Section 106 (g) of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000, as amended (22 U.S.C. § 7104). For the full text of the award term, go to <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/award-term-and-condition-for-trafficking-in-persons>. If you are unable to access this link, please contact the Grants Management Contact identified in *Section VII. Agency Contacts* of this announcement to obtain a copy of the term.

#### **Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace**

The Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 (41 U.S.C. §§ 8101-8106) requires that all organizations receiving grants from any federal agency agree to maintain a drug-free workplace. By signing the application, the Authorizing Official agrees that the grantee will provide a drug-free workplace and will comply with the requirement to notify ACF if an employee is convicted of violating a criminal drug statute. Failure to comply with these requirements may be cause for debarment. Government-wide requirements for Drug-Free Workplace for Financial Assistance are found in 2 CFR Part 182; HHS implementing regulations are set forth in 2 CFR § 382.400. All recipients of ACF grant funds must comply with the requirements in Subpart B - Requirements for Recipients Other Than Individuals, 2 CFR § 382.225. The rule is available at <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2001-title45-vol1/content-detail.html>.

#### **Debarment and Suspension**

HHS regulations published in 2 CFR Part 376 implement the governmentwide debarment and suspension system guidance (2 CFR Part 180) for HHS' non-procurement programs and activities. "Non-procurement transactions" include, among other things, grants, cooperative agreements, scholarships, fellowships, and loans. ACF implements the HHS Debarment and

Suspension regulations as a term and condition of award. Grantees may decide the method and frequency by which this determination is made and may check the Excluded Parties List System (EPLS) located at <https://www.sam.gov/>, although checking the EPLS is not required. More information is available at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants-forms>.

### **Pro-Children Act**

The Pro-Children Act of 2001, 20 U.S.C. §§ 7181 through 7184, imposes restrictions on smoking in facilities where federally funded children's services are provided. HHS grants are subject to these requirements only if they meet the Act's specified coverage. The Act specifies that smoking is prohibited in any indoor facility (owned, leased, or contracted for) used for the routine or regular provision of kindergarten, elementary, or secondary education or library services to children under the age of 18. In addition, smoking is prohibited in any indoor facility or portion of a facility (owned, leased, or contracted for) used for the routine or regular provision of federally funded health care, day care, or early childhood development, including Head Start services to children under the age of 18. The statutory prohibition also applies if such facilities are constructed, operated, or maintained with federal funds. The statute does not apply to children's services provided in private residences, facilities funded solely by Medicare or Medicaid funds, portions of facilities used for inpatient drug or alcohol treatment, or facilities where WIC coupons are redeemed. Failure to comply with the provisions of the law may result in the imposition of a civil monetary penalty of up to \$1,000 per violation and/or the imposition of an administrative compliance order on the responsible entity.

### **HHS Grants Policy Statement**

The HHS Grants Policy Statement (HHS GPS) is the Department of Health and Human Services' single policy guide for discretionary grants and cooperative agreements. ACF grant awards are subject to the requirements of the HHS GPS, which covers basic grants processes, standard terms and conditions, and points of contact, as well as important agency-specific requirements. Appendices to the HHS GPS include a glossary of terms and a list of standard abbreviations for ease of reference. The general terms and conditions in the HHS GPS will apply as indicated unless there are statutory, regulatory, or award-specific requirements to the contrary that are specified in the Notice of Award (NOA). The HHS GPS is available at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/discretionary-competitive-grants>.

### **Federal Recognition of Same-Sex Spouses/Marriage**

Recipients must adopt, review, and revise, as needed, any policies and procedures concerning Head Start and/or Early Head Start child eligibility requirements that apply the regulatory definition of “family,” to reflect inclusion of same-sex spouses and marriages. The definition of “family” in the Head Start regulations includes all persons living in the same household who are supported by the income of the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the child enrolling or participating in the Head Start program and who are “related to the parent(s) or guardian(s) by blood, marriage, or adoption.” 45 CFR 1305.2(e). The term “family” as used to determine the eligibility of a child to participate in a Head Start and/or Early Head Start program shall include a same-sex spouse. HHS recognizes marriages between individuals of the same sex who are lawfully married under the law of a state, territory, or foreign jurisdiction, as long as it would be recognized by at least one state, regardless of the state in which the couple resides.

**Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)**

Applications funded by federal grant programs are subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. § 552. Such applications are frequently requested under the FOIA, consistent with the FOIA's requirement to proactively disclose frequently requested materials at 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(2)(D). Each released application will receive appropriate redaction of specific information to protect personal privacy and competitively sensitive commercial information. Information on filing a FOIA request is available at <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/submit-a-foia-request>.

**Award Term and Condition under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964**

Recipients of federal financial assistance (FFA) from HHS must administer their programs in compliance with federal civil rights law. This means that recipients of HHS funds must ensure equal access to their programs without regard to a person's race, color, national origin, disability, age and, in some circumstances, sex and religion. This includes ensuring your programs are accessible to persons with limited English proficiency. HHS provides guidance to recipients of FFA on meeting their legal obligation to take reasonable steps to provide meaningful access to their programs by persons with limited English proficiency. Please see <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/civilrights/resources/laws/revisedlep.html>. The HHS Office for Civil Rights also provides guidance on complying with civil rights laws enforced by HHS. Please see <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/civilrights/understanding/section1557/index.html>; and <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/civilrights/understanding/index.html>. Recipients of FFA also have specific legal obligations for serving qualified individuals with disabilities. Please see <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/civilrights/understanding/disability/index.html>. Please contact the HHS Office for Civil Rights for more information about obligations and prohibitions under federal civil rights laws at <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/office/about/rgn-hqaddresses.html> or call 1-800-368-1019 or TDD 1-800-537-7697. Also note it is an HHS Departmental goal to ensure access to quality, culturally competent care, including long-term services and supports, for vulnerable populations. For further guidance on providing culturally and linguistically appropriate services, recipients should review the National Standards for Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services in Health and Health Care at <http://minorityhealth.hhs.gov/omh/browse.aspx?lvl=2&lvlid=53>.

**Award Term and Condition for Unpaid Federal Tax Liability**

Grantees are subject to the requirement contained in Section 744 of the "Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015," (Pub.L. 113-235, Title VII, General Provisions – Government-Wide), which says "None of the funds made available by this or any other Act may be used to enter into a contract, memorandum of understanding, or cooperative agreement with, make a grant to, or provide a loan or loan guarantee to, any corporation that has any unpaid Federal tax liability that has been assessed, for which all judicial and administrative remedies have been exhausted or have lapsed, and that is not being paid in a timely manner pursuant to an agreement with the authority responsible for collecting the tax liability, where the awarding agency is aware of the unpaid tax liability, unless a Federal agency has considered suspension or debarment of the corporation and has made a determination that this further action is not necessary to protect the interests of the Government."

## **Other Administrative and National Policy Requirements**

**The regulations relevant to Head Start (known as the Program Performance Standards) are:**

- 45 CFR Part 1301, Head Start Grants Administration
- 45 CFR Part 1302, Policies and Procedures for Selection, Initial Funding, and Refunding of Head Start Grantees, and for Selection of Replacement Grantees
- 45 CFR Part 1303, Appeal Procedures for Head Start Grantees and Current or Prospective Delegate Agencies
- 45 CFR Part 1304, Program Performance Standards for the Operation of Head Start Programs by Grantee and Delegate Agencies
- 45 CFR Part 1305, Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment and Attendance in Head Start
- 45 CFR Part 1306, Head Start Staffing Requirements and Program Options
- 45 CFR Part 1307, Policies and Procedures for Designation Renewal of Head Start and Early Head Start Grantees
- 45 CFR Part 1308, Head Start Program Performance Standards on Services for Children with Disabilities
- 45 CFR Part 1309, Head Start Facilities Purchase, Major Renovation and Construction
- 45 CFR Part 1310, Head Start Transportation
- And all applicable grant regulations

Copies of the current applicable Head Start regulations are available at the websites identified at the end of this announcement. In addition, copies of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circulars that are used to determine whether expenditures by Head Start and Early Head Start grantees are allowable can be found at: [http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/grants\\_circulars.html](http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/grants_circulars.html).

### **VI.3. Reporting**

Grantees under this funding opportunity announcement will be required to submit performance progress and financial reports periodically throughout the project period. The frequency of required reporting is listed later in this section.

#### **Head Start Program Reporting**

All Head Start grantees will be required to submit program information periodically, including for example, monthly enrollment reports, an annual Program Information Report (PIR), and service location and staff contact information. Grantees will be notified in advance of required reporting through various means, such as Notice of Award (NoA) documents, email correspondence, and letters. Additional information on Head Start Program Reporting can be found at <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/data/pir>.

The PIR serves as the annual performance progress report for the Office of Head Start.

Performance Progress Reports:                      Annually

Financial Reports:

Semi-Annually

### **Federal Financial Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) Subaward and Executive Compensation**

Awards issued as a result of this funding opportunity may be subject to the Transparency Act subaward and executive compensation reporting requirements of 2 CFR Part 170. See ACF's Award Term for Federal Financial Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) Subaward and Executive Compensation Reporting Requirement implementing this requirement and additional award applicability information at [https:// www.acf.hhs.gov/ grants/ discretionary-competitive-grants](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/discretionary-competitive-grants).

### **Tangible Property Report (SF-428)**

All ACF grantees are required to submit the Tangible Personal Property Form (SF-428). The SF-428 is a standard form used to collect information related to tangible personal property: equipment with a unit cost of \$5,000 or more, and residual supplies with an aggregate fair market value exceeding \$5,000. The form consists of the cover sheet and three attachments to be used as required by the terms and conditions of the award: Annual Report; Final Report and a Disposition Request. A Supplemental Sheet, SF-428S, may be used to provide detailed individual item information. The form is available at [http:// www.whitehouse.gov/ omb/ grants\\_forms](http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_forms).

### **Real Property Status Report (SF-429)**

All ACF grantees are required to submit the Real Property Status Report SF-429, if applicable. The SF-429 is a standard report to be used by recipients of federal financial assistance to report real property status or to request agency instructions on real property that is provided as Government Furnished Property (GFP) or acquired (i.e., purchased, constructed, or renovated) in whole or in part under a Notice of Award. This form consists of the cover sheet and three attachments to be used as frequently as required in the terms and conditions of the award: General reporting (SF-429A, Attachment A), Request to Acquire, Improve or Furnish (SF-429B, Attachment B), or Disposition or Encumbrance Request (SF-429C, Attachment C). The forms are available at [http:// www.whitehouse.gov/ omb/ grants\\_forms](http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_forms).

## **VII. HHS Awarding Agency Contact(s)**

### **Program Office Contact**

Shawna Pinckney

Administration for Children and Families

Office of Head Start

Portals Building

1250 Maryland Ave., SW

Washington, DC 20024

Phone: (888) 242-0684

Email: [OHSTech@reviewops.org](mailto:OHSTech@reviewops.org)

## **Office of Grants Management Contact**

Kenneth Sosne

Administration for Children and Families

370 L'Enfant Promenade, SW

Aerospace Building - 6th Floor East

Washington, DC 20447

Phone: (202) 401-5784

Email: [kenneth.sosne@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:kenneth.sosne@acf.hhs.gov)

## **Federal Relay Service:**

Hearing-impaired and speech-impaired callers may contact the Federal Relay Service (FedRelay) at [www.gsa.gov/fedrelay](http://www.gsa.gov/fedrelay).

## **VIII. Other Information**

### **Reference Websites**

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) <http://www.hhs.gov/>.

HHS Grants Forecast <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/hhsgrantsforecast/index.cfm>.

Administration for Children and Families (ACF) <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/>.

ACF Grants Homepage <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants>.

ACF Funding Opportunities <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/open/foa/>.

ACF "How to Apply for a Grant" <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/how-to-apply-for-grants>.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) <https://www.cfda.gov/>.

For submission of a paper format application, all required Standard Forms (SF), assurances, and certifications are available on the ACF Grants-Forms page through <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants-forms>.

Standard grant forms are available at the [Grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html) Forms Repository webpage at <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html>.

For information regarding accessibility issues, visit the Grants.gov Accessibility Compliance Page at <http://www07.grants.gov/web/grants/support/technical-support/accessibility-compliance.html>.

Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/>.

The *Federal Register* <https://www.federalregister.gov/>.

United States Code (U.S.C.) <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/>.

### Head Start Information on the Internet

The Head Start Act as amended by The Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007, (Pub. L. 110-134) <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/standards/law>.

Head Start Program Performance Standards (45 CFR Parts 1301-1311) [http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/waisidx\\_07/45cfrv4\\_07.html#1301](http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/waisidx_07/45cfrv4_07.html#1301).

### Applicant Support Website

OHS strongly encourages entities interested in applying for this Early Head Start funding opportunity to visit <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/hs/grants>. This interactive website offers a robust collection of resources intended to support organizations in gaining a deeper understanding of the Head Start and Early Head Start programs, the FOA, and evaluation criteria. A profile of current grantee services, equipment, and inventory can also be found through this website located at [www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ohs/funding](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ohs/funding). Finally, the website includes helpful tips for applying via Grants.gov. All interested applicants are reminded to frequently refer back to this FOA when preparing their application.

Prospective applicants will also have the opportunity to send questions to OHS by e-mail at [OHS\\_Tech@reviewops.org](mailto:OHS_Tech@reviewops.org). A summary of the questions and OHS responses will be posted for public view on the applicant support website as soon as they become available.

Interested applicants may also contact the OHS Operations Center at (888) 242-0684 or TTY: 711 if they have additional questions.

### Application Checklist

Applicants may use the checklist below as a guide when preparing your application package.

| What to Submit          | Where Found  | When to Submit  |
|-------------------------|--|---|
| The Project Description | Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> . | Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> . |

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| SF-424 - Application for Federal Assistance                      | <p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications.</i></p> <p>For electronic application submission, these forms are available on the FOA's Grants.gov "Download Opportunity Instructions and Application" page under "Download Application Package" in the section entitled, "Mandatory."</p> <p>Also available at <a href="http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html">http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html</a> by using the link to "SF-424 Family."</p> | <p>Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.</i></p> <p><b>Do not attach required application elements or additional pages to the SF-424 at Questions 14 or 15.</b><br/><b><i>See Section IV.2. Formatting ACF Applications.</i></b></p> |
| The Project Budget and Budget Justification                      | <p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Budget and Budget Justification</i> of the announcement.</p>   | <p>Submission is required in addition to submission of SF-424A or SF-424C.</p> <p>It must be submitted with the application package by the due date in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.</i></p>  |
| Commitment of Non-Federal Resources                              | <p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Budget and Budget Justification.</i></p>   | <p>Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.</i></p>  |
| SF-424A Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs / SF-424B | <p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications.</i></p> <p>For electronic application</p>  | <p>Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in</p>  |

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|---|---|---|
| <p>Assurances - Non-Construction Programs</p> <p>and</p> <p>SF-424C - Budget Information Construction Programs / SF-424D - Assurances Construction Programs</p> | <p>submission, these forms are available on the FOA's Grants.gov "Download Opportunity Instructions and Application" page under "Download Application Package" in the section entitled, "Mandatory."</p> <p>Also available at <a href="http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html">http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html</a> by using the link to "SF-424 Family."</p> <p>These forms are <b>required</b> for applications under this FOA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Projects that include <b>non-construction and construction</b> activities must submit the SF-424A, B, C, and D, along with the SF-424 and SF-P/PSL.</li> </ul> | <p><i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.</i></p>   |
| <p>DUNS Number (Universal Identifier) and Systems for Award Management (SAM) registration.</p>  | <p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)</i> in the announcement.</p> <p>To obtain a DUNS number, go to <a href="http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform">http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform</a>.</p> <p>To register at SAM, go to <a href="http://www.sam.gov">http://www.sam.gov</a>.</p>  | <p>A DUNS number and registration at SAM.gov are required for all applicants.</p> <p>Active registration at SAM must be maintained throughout the application and project award period.</p> |
| <p>SF-424 Key Contact Form</p>  | <p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications.</i></p> <p>For electronic application submission, this form is available on the FOA's Grants.gov "Download Opportunity Instructions and Application" page under "Download Application</p>   | <p>Submission is due with the application by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.</i></p>                              |

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|  | <p>Package"</p> <p>in the section entitled, "Optional."</p> <p>The form is also available at <a href="http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html">http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html</a></p> <p>by using the link to "SF-424 Family."</p>  |   |
| SF-Project/Performance Site Location(s) (SF-P/PSL) | <p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i>.</p> <p>For electronic application submission, these forms are available on the FOA's Grants.gov "Download Opportunity Instructions and Application" page under "Download Application Package" in the section entitled, "Mandatory."</p> <p>Also available at <a href="http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html">http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html</a></p> <p>by using the link to "SF-424 Family."</p>                        | <p>Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i>.</p>   |
| SF-LLL - Disclosure of Lobbying Activities         | <p>"Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying" is referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i>.</p> <p>For electronic application submission, this form is available on the FOA's Grants.gov "Download Opportunity Instructions and Application" page under "Download Application Package" in the section entitled, "Optional."</p> <p>The form is available in the electronic application kit at Grants.gov</p> <p>and at <a href="http://www.grants.gov/web/">http://www.grants.gov/web/</a></p> | <p>If submission of this form is applicable, it is due at the time of application.</p> <p>If it not available at the time of application, it may also be submitted prior to the award of a grant.</p> |

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|  | <p><a href="#">grants/ forms.html</a> by using the link to "SF-424 Family."</p> <p>If applicable, submission of this form is required if any funds have been paid, or will be paid, to any person for influencing, or attempting to influence, an officer or employee of any agency, a member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan.</p> |   |
| <p>Certification Regarding Lobbying<br/>(Grants.gov Lobbying Form)</p> | <p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications.</i></p> <p>For electronic application submission, these forms are available on the FOA's Grants.gov page under the "Application Package" tab in the section entitled, "Mandatory."</p> <p>Available at <a href="http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html">http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html</a> by using the link to "SF-424 Family."</p>  | <p>Submission is due with the application package or prior to the award of a grant.</p>   |
| <p>Project Summary/Abstract</p>  | <p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description.</i> The Project Summary/Abstract is limited to one single-spaced page.</p>   | <p>Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.</i></p> |

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| Table of Contents                           | Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> .  | Submit with the application by the due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> .   |
| Assurance: Absence of Non-compete Agreement | Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i> and <i>Section V.1. Criteria</i> , with a template provided in the <i>Appendix</i> . | Any applicants that wish to receive the bonus points must include in their applications the <b>signed</b> statement that is included in the <i>Appendix</i> of this announcement. The statement must be <b>signed</b> by the person who is authorized to sign the application on behalf of the applicant. Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> . |
| Certificate of Good Standing                | Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i> .  | Submission is recommended and is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> .  |

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|--|---|--|
| Proof of Non-Profit Status                                   | Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description, Legal Status of Applicant Entity.</i>     | Proof of non-profit status should be submitted with the application package by the due date listed in the <i>Overview</i> and <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.</i> If it is not available at the time of application submission, it must be submitted prior to the award of a grant. |
| Proof of Policy Council Approval                             | Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description, Additional Eligibility Documentation.</i> | Submission due by the application due date found in <i>Overview</i> and <i>Section IV.4.</i>   |
| Organizational Capacity                                      | Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description.</i>                                       | Submission due by the application due date found in <i>Overview</i> and <i>Section IV.4.</i>   |
| Third-Party Agreements (also, MOUs and Consortia Agreements) | Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Project Description.</i>   | If available, submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4.</i> If not available at the time of application submission, due by the time of award.   |

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| Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (IDR)                                    | Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Budget and Budget Justification</i> .<br>The IDR must be submitted with the application package. | If the IDR is available by the application due date, it must be submitted with the application package. If it is not available by the application due date, listed in the <i>Overview</i> and <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> , it may be submitted prior to the award of a grant. |
| Letters of Support  | Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> .  | Submission is due by the application due date listed in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> .   |
| Phase Two Narrative   | Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> .  | Submission due by the application due date found in <i>Overview</i> and <i>Section IV.4</i> .  |
| Phase Two Attachments (financial statements and notes, audit reports) | Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> .  | Submission due by the application due date found in <i>Overview</i> and <i>Section IV.4</i> .  |
| Plan for Oversight of Federal Award Funds                             | Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> .  | Submission due by the application due date found in <i>Overview</i> and <i>Section IV.4</i> .  |

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|---|--|---|
| Protection of Sensitive and/or Confidential Information | Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> . | Submission due by the application due date found in <i>Overview</i> and <i>Section IV.4</i> . |
|---|--|---|

## Appendix

### Assurance Template: Absence of Non-compete Agreement

If any applicant wishes to receive bonus points, this assurance must be completed, **signed** and dated, and submitted as part of their application in the appendices.

Date

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of (organization), I, (name), attest that (organization) does not have a non-compete or other agreement with any entity, at the time this application is submitted, which prohibits the entity from applying for a Head Start or Early Head Start grant on its own behalf or imposes a penalty on that entity for making such application.

(Signature)

(First and Last Name)

(Title)

Must be signed and dated by the authorized representative of the applicant organization.